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Talkin' Black and Sounding Gay: An Examination of the Construction of a Multiplex Identity via Intraspeaker Variation

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TALKIN' BLACK AND SOUNDING GAY: AN EXAMINATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MULTIPLEX IDENTITY VIA INTRASPEAKER VARIATION

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DEDICATION

For the voiceless…[1]

[1]…and the culture.

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First and foremost, I would like to thank my committee (en masse). I could not have asked for a more supportive and encourage group of scholars to review and vastly enhance the work that I have attempted. Tracey, IT HAS BEEN A JOURNEY! Thank you for fighting with me and on my behalf. You have my sincerest appreciation. Elaine, thank you for seeing me. You have always managed to make sense out of the chaos that was my thought process. Sherina, thank you for agreeing to serve on my committee and for helping me to crystalize and give language to concepts that I was sure existed but had yet to understand. Rusty, I cannot express how much I value your belief and trust in me as a budding scholar. Thank you for truth, compassion, and humanity I extend my thanks to the University of South Carolina, its English Department, and its Linguistics Program. I am grateful for the relationships, support, and growth that you have afforded me. To the participants in this study, I offer my deepest gratitude for the contribution of your thoughts, voices, and time. Thank you for allowing me into your lives, for however brief a time, and for sharing your truths with me. Lastly, to my family, thank you for your quiet prayers and your faith that this time was not wasted. To Brian Terrence Cornelius II, you have been my rock in every way imaginable and I share this work with you. Thank you for being my inspiration. May you and every Black boy in the world find joy and freedom in his authentically complex self. That is my hope for this dissertation.

ABSTRACT

Gay African-American men hold membership in at least three groups – Gay, Black, and Male – that are grounded in ideologies and which provide linguistic resources that are complex and potentially conflicting. As such, these men exist at the cross-section of socio-cultural groups whose perspectives and presentations are often framed in opposition to one another. This dissertation seeks to explore the ways in which such complex identities are created through the use of language. Specifically, this project will investigate how a Gay Black man (GBM) constructs his complex identity over the course of several interviews/conversations in which topic and interlocutor shifts require shifts of orientation and alignment practices. By examining how a single speaker manipulates multiple varieties in this way, I seek to better understand the social meanings indexed by and linked to each variety in the speaker's repertoire and ultimately understand why and how varieties are chosen and managed at the level of the individual speaker.

In this project, I will investigate how a single individual, who has full command of both African American Language (AAL) and Gay Male Speech (GMS), manipulates these varieties according to the effects of topic and addressee, and the extent to which such intraspeaker variation challenges and/or complicates circulating narratives about these varieties and about the nature of intraspeaker variation, more generally. The focus of this project will be an African-American male who identifies as gay and lives in the

metropolitan Atlanta area. In addition to AAL and GMS, I will also consider the use (or lack thereof) of White women's speech as described by Robin Lakoff (1975) and as it is associated in the speech of drag queens by Barrett (1999) by the subject in this study. This approach will allow me to observe the extent to which style shifting/switching is motivated by addressee and, more specifically, by the effects of race, gender, and sexual orientation, as they are perceived by these interlocutors.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS

?	end of intonation unit, rising intonation
:	length
~	rapid speech, speech is slurred together
-	self-interruption, break in the word, choppy speech
º	quiet phonation
BOLD	emphasized speech
(.)	unmeasured pause, 0.5 seconds or less
@	laughter
h	out-breath
[ ]	overlapping speech
(( ))	transcriber comment
‘ ‘	reported speech

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS[2]

AAE .....African American English

AAL .....African American Language

AAWL ..... African American Women's Language

BIBF .....Bicurious Black Female

BIWF .....Bisexual White Female

GBM .....Gay Black Male

GMS .....Gay Male speech

GME .....Gay Male English

GWM .....Gay White Male

HBCUs .....Historically Black Colleges and Universities

LGBTQ+ .....Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Queer/Questioning

MAE .....Mainstream American English

MS .....Male Speech

POC .....People of color

PWI ..... Private White Institution

SBM ..... Straight Black Male

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[2] Note: In this project, I capitalize all terms linked to identity categories for the sake of consistency, thus, all sexual identity categories, both “Black” and “White”, as well as Gender Identity labels (i.e. Male).

SWM.....Straight White Male

WL .....Women's language

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Gay Black men who expressly identify as such exist at the cross-sections of socio-cultural groups whose perspectives and presentations are often framed and defined in opposition to one another. To exist as Black in Mainstream White America is to risk being seen as a looming threat that must be subdued and neutralized at any given time. For Black men, in particular, having to contend with a history of prejudice has often required the mitigation or ultimate removal of their sense of racialized male identities for the sake of survival. At the same time, Black men draw their sense of masculinity from the Mainstream heteronormative view which roots it in power and sexuality. An attempt to live out this type of hegemonic masculinity could prove to be detrimental in a society that has labeled them as "super-predators" (Gearing and Phillip 2016). However, failure to produce such a masculine performance calls into question their social status as uniquely male and Black, leaving them at an impasse. As our cultural treatment of Gender is undoubtedly linked to our assumptions about sexuality, more specifically heteronormativity, these assumptions greatly inform the socially prescribed means of indexing and constructing gendered behavior. Additionally, race draws from and adds to these norms of performativity creating racialized heteronormative gendered personae. Since both Mainstream American and African-American communities treat masculinity as heterosexual by default, the introduction of same sex desire (which is socially positioned in contrast with

heteronormative masculinity) can be a direct threat to one's Blackness and maleness simultaneously. Thus, holding membership in all of these identity groups can yield a uniquely complex identity that can be challenging to navigate.

1.1 SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED IDENTITIES

With very few exceptions, our experience within society is entirely guided by concepts and ideals such as currency, laws, and time. These ideals are some of the countless social constructs that enable us to make sense of the world within which we live and vastly make up that which we refer to as "reality." However, the boundary between understanding the world and shaping it are often unclear in terms of social constructivism. In this dissertation, I will address constructivism simply as corporately agreed upon and/or accepted social norms which result in the subsequent behaviors that create reality as experienced in the world. I draw on this perspective of social constructivism, highlighting its relational nature as that which results in collectively agreed upon realities that are jointly constructed. Though identity can be constructed by a speaker, there are a number of social factors which could influence behavior shifts. Thus we cannot look at identity construction or categories in isolation. By focusing on interaction, the invaluable resource of context is provided which will further our understanding of the relationship between language varieties and identity groups. With that in mind, I would be remiss not to consider the role of interaction in the construction of personhood with regard to larger sociological influences or the broader indexical order (Silverstein 1996, 2003). Accounting for as many variables as possible and their interactions will allow us to tease apart specific motivators for shifts in both identity construction and language variation (Irvine 2001).

Stance is critical to the interactive construction of identity as one evaluates and positions the self and the others as a means of constructing what Michael Silverstein (2003) refers to as a relational identity (Hill 1995; Kiesling 2002, 2005). Stance relies heavily on relationality and distinction, the latter of which is considered in Judith Irvine's (2001) work exploring the use of style as intra-speaker variation.

John W. DuBois (2007) discusses stance as an event of the evaluation of objects and the signaling of relations during interactions and conversations. The stance that is taken by speakers indexes the relational positioning of social actors that is rooted in the evaluation of an object or other interlocutors. Evaluation leads to the positioning of one's self with regard to said participants. According to DuBois, as one evaluates an object, he aligns (or disaligns) with another speaker in much the same way. DuBois provided a framework that specifically explores how a speaker's evaluation of an object works towards creating a stance. As stance leads to positioning, one is able to establish himself within the larger narrative, or conversation, constructing the self in the process.

Erving Goffman (1981) established the framework of footing and evaluation of a participant's alignment (the result of stance) in narrative tellings and how said alignment becomes a frame for the events that are recounted. He argued that a speaker's stance towards varying events within narratives creates a framework through which he organizes, evaluates, and relationally places himself, constructing his identity contextually. Social construction is interactional by nature, thus stance (and the subsequent position of horizontal alignment) could be considered one of the smallest units of interactive meaning making and would thus be an original and crucial means of social construction. Goff-

man's inclusion of the invocation of cultural systems makes his framework more applicable for the exploration of how a speaker uses language to establish his positioning and projects his experience of cultural and social negotiations such as those of race, gender, and sexuality. The above frameworks greatly inform the critical impact of interaction in processes of identity formation lending significance to conversation as a prime arena for processes of construction, maintenance, and negotiation.

In some of the earliest work on identity construction, George H. Mead (1934) treats the self as a social process. In their seminal research, Berger and Luckman (1966) presented the post-modern commonplace that our identities and understandings of the world around us as socially constructed, sourced, and maintained via social interaction. The problematic nature of the essentialist approach to identity is related to a lack of consideration for agency, complexity, and social impact which leaves much to be desired for the nuanced nature and evolution of the self. There are a number of theoretical frameworks and approaches that explore identity as a construct that may be negotiated (Ting-Toomey 2015), is sourced from and consequently indexes identity group membership (Gumperz 1964), and can be enacted via performance (Butler 1990). This dissertation will take up these perspectives, rooting its focus less on the "being" of identity and more on its "doing," particularly what Goffman (1959) refers to as "impression management," the constant, emergent process of identity construction. Based on the above, I will approach identity (in terms of gender, sexuality, and race) beyond the essentialized aspect as social constructions formed through social interaction.

In order to address identity as a socially constructed reality, we must consider three crucial aspects with which social constructs are associated: power as motivation for group stratification, corporately agreed upon means of constructing reality, and the construction itself as enactment. The purpose of power, at its simplest is control. Said control serves as a motivating factor for stratifying speakers creating dyadic systems. As those with power and social influence usually establish the parameters of social construction, they often mark themselves the standard in doing so (the hegemony) constructing dyad-like structures such as gender and race. These constructed identities are embedded with and reproduce the power norms that result from historical and social prescriptions. This stratification leads to positioning (us vs. them). As power surfaces in interaction, it must be negotiated, the end result being establishing oneself in proximity to others and reproducing or challenging this stratification.

Once these dyads are formed, they are solidified into groups or communities which root their sense of identity in distinction from "others." After accepted, "norms" are disseminated through communities which function as sources of beliefs, sanctioned behavior, and the means with which to do so. Said groups corporately establish the normalized means of demonstrating authentic membership as the tools needed to index in-group allegiance and to ultimately bring the construct to fruition via performative action. Anthony Elliot (2001) cites the self as "a symbolic project that the individual actively and creatively forges" through symbolic means such as appearance movement, clothes, facial expressions, and language. This enactment is the end result of the idealized construct which is manifested in our behaviors within society. These three elements (power, community

memberships, and performance) are integral to social constructivism and will guide this project's approach.

"Language does not mirror reality; rather it constitutes it" -Gail T. Fairhurst

The object of social constructivism is to make sense (or meaning) of the world as well as experiencing it. This meaning making process is almost entirely facilitated by language in some form or another (narratives, myths, education, etc.) The purpose of this project is to examine the extent of the role language plays in our understanding of reality as well as our creation of it, particularly, that of the self.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This dissertation seeks to explore the ways in which such complex identities are constructed through the use of intraspeaker variation. Specifically, this project closely examines the ways in which a Gay Black man (Dan) constructs his uniquely complex identity over the course of several conversations during which topic and interlocutor shifts require varying orientation and performative practices. The overarching goal of this project is to investigate ways in which we create the reality of identity via language. In order to do this, I segment the core goal into two sub-goals, the first of which being the need to, establish a working understanding of identity as a complex social construct. Identity (like individuals) do not exist in monolithic vacuums, thus I must develop a solid grasp of identity as interactive and complex. As identity groups yield linguistic resources that aid in construction, and taking into consideration the1st sub-goal of solidifying identity as multiplex, my second subgoal involves developing a solid understanding of the ways in which language constructs identity as complex and multiple (i.e. intraspeaker

variation.) Combined, these two sub-goals should lead back to the primary motive of examining the ways in which language is used to construct identity.

These goals guide the following research questions:

1. How does a single speaker construct a multiplex repertoire of identity through the use of his linguistic repertoire during interactions? Specifically, how does he negotiate the power dynamics embedded in his identity, index in/out-group identity group memberships, and perform his identity with the use of intraspeaker variation.
2. What are the ways in which power norms are manifested during these interactions, particularly the negotiation of identity? How has language been embedded in and served to reproduce or challenge said power systems?
3. How is intraspeaker variation used to maintain identity community memberships and navigate potential conflict between the identities within a speaker's repertoire of identity?
4. Given the interactional nature of maintaining and negotiating identity, what role do addressee and audience design play in the use of intraspeaker variation?

In order to properly address identity beyond the essential, I must treat it as complex. Black masculinity varies greatly from Black femininity and may not be constructed in the same manner. Identity is often treated as single faceted, particularly in regard to categories such as race gender, and sexuality. However, these identities are formed with the assistance of resources that are drawn from and serve to reestablish multiple group memberships. These multiple memberships can often be placed in juxtaposition with one another, which forces a speaker to have to manage and maintain them all. These conflicts

tend to be grossly informed by notions of broader social power which must be negotiated, sometimes during these processes of maintenance. In an age where the sociological buzzword is "intersectionality" (Crenshaw 1989), we must begin to accept and embrace identity beyond static, single-faceted labels. The contributions of scholars such as Alice Walker and bell hooks to the field of Gender Studies were much-needed explorations of the complexity of gender as it intersects with other identity elements such as race and the power with which they are associated. Though not novel in concept, Kimberle Crenshaw coined the term "Intersectionality" to address this complex relationship between identity and racial injustice. Because of this vantage point, I will not merely consider the construction of any single identity element in isolation but will instead evaluate them under the complex conditions in which they exist in our social realities. Thus, my first subgoal is to establish a more nuanced understanding of identity as multi-faceted. As such, I will investigate the construction of identity as multiplex.

If each identity is the result of group membership and each membership provides linguistic resources with which to construct said identity, then a speaker with more than one identity is tasked with managing them all. Thus, the second sub-goal of this project is to investigate the nature and usage of intraspeaker variation by a linguistic individual. In doing so, I draw from Gumperz's (1964) treatment of intraspeaker variation as a linguistic repertoire composed of multiple language varieties and resources from which one draws to navigate social settings.

If a speaker has multiple identity categories that he would like to enact, and multiple corresponding linguistic resources that can be used to do so, one must consider how

these resources function singularly and in tandem through intraspeaker variation. As linguistic resources are closely associated with identity being sourced from identity group memberships or speech communities (Gumperz 1972; Labov 1972), a speaker who holds a multiplex identity must also manage the linguistic resources which his multiple memberships provide. Thus, instead of exploring singular linguistic features via isolation, I posit that, like identity, context is crucial to a thorough understanding of how language and identity function and that we should move towards a more comprehensive analytical approach that incorporates multiple contextual influences on linguistic and identity presentations to understand these elements within their own context and as they relate to one another. While linguistic varieties and their labels are important for painting the verbal landscape of various speech communities, they often fail to capture the multiple cultural influences that interact with language. As such, they can be confining when dealing with features shared across identity groups. Thus, my second sub-goal is to investigate the linguistic repertoire as a single mechanism drawn upon during the process of intraspeaker variation. I argue that we must begin to move beyond the confines and limits of strict linguistic labels in order to observe linguistic features as they interact with one in the context of a speaker's identity construction via discursive turns. By investigating how a single speaker manipulates multiple linguistic elements as he constructs a multiplex identity, I seek to better understand the social meanings indexed by and linked to each language variety within the speaker's linguistic repertoire, how said varieties are chosen, and the nature of their relationship with his identity.

Given the abovementioned importance of intersectionality, the second sub-goal's purpose is to explore intraspeaker variation (i.e. the linguistic repertoire) as a linguistic medium through which a multiple identity is constructed. This endeavor would entail a need to examine intraspeaker variation as a mechanism, to observe its contents, how it functions, and what motivates its occurrence. I investigate the ways in which multiple linguistic varieties interact with one another within a single linguistic individual's repertoire. Are repertoires simply chaotic warehouses of linguistic features or are they organized? Is intraspeaker variation induced solely by audience design? How do in-group vs. out-group memberships factor into language practices? What about topic? Do varieties function by switching, shifting, meshing, or something different entirely. I investigate how linguistic varieties and features are drawn upon (when? Why? How?) as well as how conflicts between them are managed when they are not in complimentary distribution, examining situational prioritization of varieties, and how they inform and contribute to each other leading to multiplicity reflecting an intersectional sense of self.

With this, I seek to expand the burgeoning literature that has begun to deal with what I refer to as the repertoire of identity (Kroskrity 1993; Barrett 1999, 2017) and intersectionality in hopes of broadening the discussion of personhood, particularly with regard to gender, sexuality, and race. I hypothesize that an intersectional approach which highlights the complexity of identity would grant richer insight into each individual identity category as it functions in multiple environments and as it is impacted by a number of social factors, yielding a more nuanced and accurate treatment of identity. I employ the term "multiplex" to describe both identity and linguistic répertoires as single units com-

posed of multiple and potentially conflicting elements that exist in a complex relationship. I refer to the repertoire of identity as a single system possessed by an individual who holds membership in a number of identity groups. Like the repertoire, said system is composed of several resources drawn from said groups which are used to negotiate, maintain, and perform each membership individually and/or the identity as a whole. Combined, an understanding of both language and identity as mechanisms (individually and as they relate to one another) should grant insight into how language, via intraspeaker variation, is used as a means of navigating and managing socio-cultural power dynamics to better locate the cross-section at which language and identity meet and function together.

The central hypothesis which guides this project is that language and identity are not only related but that they greatly impact and inform one another. Particularly, I hypothesize that language is sensitive to elements of identity and what we witness as intraspeaker variation functions as a mirror into a speaker's interactive management and navigation of a multiplex identity as well as behaving as a means of doing this work. In addition, due to the complexity of both identity and language, I also theorize that the act of employing intraspeaker variation functions more like a linguistic meshing than a switching or mixing. Because of the fluidity of both language and identity, I argue that in order to fully understand these phenomena, we must adjust our approach to both account for the unique complexities of each separately and together. Further, the relationship between the two can be better understood through the exploration of intraspeaker variation

in conjunction with moments of multiplex identity formation allowing for the isolation of different identity factors and the language varieties with which they are associated.

To observe the ways in which a speaker with a multiplex identity negotiates, maintains, and performs his identity interactively with speakers who hold non-shared memberships and present a number of power dynamics, the selection of a central figure holding memberships in the Gay, Black, and male identity groups is necessary. Based on preliminary observation and familiarity with Black LGBTQ+ culture, I found that Gay Black men consistently used features attributed to both AAVE (African American Vernacular English) and AAWL (African American Women's Language), drawing on both Black masculinity, Black femininity and Gay male/White female identities to construct unique personae which transcended boundaries providing a myriad of environments in which to observe the complexity of AAL[3] as well as the use of intraspeaker variation. It is for the above reasons that I chose a Gay Black male as the subject of this dissertation.

Given the interactive nature of identity construction, in conjunction with the above-discussed role of the interlocutor in the induction of intraspeaker variation, I will test the above hypotheses by introducing six interlocutors who possess singular or dual memberships in each identity category. The need to address the variables of gender, sexuality, and race yielded a requisite of three African-American interlocutors and three White interlocutors. For each racial group, there was one Gay male, one Straight male, and one

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[3] I encompass all variations of Black linguistic varieties (MCAAE, AAWL, AAVE) under their umbrella term. This classification does not exclude the features which may overlap (such as nasal fronting) but instead classifies them based on proximity to other features which are more closely bounded to AAL (such as copula absence of unique speech events like Call Outs).

female to control for gender. In addition to race and sexuality, the inclusion of a female interlocutor allowed me to explore the potential surfacing of "feminine speech" often attributed to White women's speech, as a marker of Gay identity.

I seek to examine how behavior and language shifts based on the demographics of other speakers contribute to the question of style shifting/switching as motivated by addressee and, more specifically, by the effects of race, gender, and sexual orientation, as they are perceived by the central subject. In doing so, I hope to observe how Dan uses his linguistic repertoire to orient around these individuals, their identities, and the power dynamics they represent with the hope of exploring and unpacking the above research questions.

1.3 DISSERTATION OVERVIEW

The dissertation proceeds as follows: Chapter 2 is a thorough review of literature pertinent to my research, which is divided into two major sub-sections. The first subsection begins with a discussion of the construction of identity via power norms, community memberships and performativity. This discussion is followed by a review of linguistic research as it relates to gender, sexuality, and race as social identities accompanied by an overview of the histories, power dynamics, theory, and discussions with which they are associated. I conclude with an in-depth consideration of intraspeaker variation and the use of language to navigate multiplex identities via style, diglossia, and bilingualism.

Chapter 3 is a detailed overview of my methodological approaches with regard to both the collection and analysis of the data upon which the dissertation is based. I discuss

the geographic setting, participants, methods of acquiring participants, recording materials used, analytical methods, and transcription conventions employed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 analyzes Dan's use of his linguistic répertoire while navigating around his interlocutors with the goal of negotiating the power norms with which his multiple identity memberships are associated. The introduction of speakers who hold differing and potentially opposing out-group memberships such as Straight Black males or Gay White males bring to the fore potentially opposing power dynamics which will have to be negotiated during the interactions bringing to the fore the linguistic means to do so. As he positions himself in relation to his interlocutors, his linguistic practices should reflect his orientation, allowing insight into the role of language in negotiating practices.

Chapter 5 explores the maintenance of Dan's multiple identity group memberships as he interacts with in-group members and is tasked with exhibiting alignment and solidarity in different situational contexts. As Dan interacts with speakers who share at least one community membership, and as his own membership is challenged or affirmed alongside others such as his sexual identity, his use of his linguistic repertoire should serve to aid in his balance and maintenance of these multiple identities and allegiances.

Chapter 6 is the final analysis chapter of the dissertation and serves to assemble the identity categories and their respective linguistic resources into a complex analysis of multiplex identity repertoire as it is performed by Dan via his linguistic repertoire. It explores the complexities which can exist within a single speaker, how they are managed by the speaker's use of language, and how they are enacted in a world which is not always welcoming towards the idea of identity as a self-contained multitude. The final chapter

provides my conclusions as I walk through the entire narrative of the analyzed data, study limitations, and future directions for research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the ways in which language is used to construct one's identity. This goal is rooted in the implication that identity is not essentialized and therefore can be constructed which I define as (inter)actively created and forged by a speaker via negotiation, identity group membership maintenance, and performativity. Despite my segmentation of identity construction into three separate processes, I am not arguing that these are the sole means of creating the self and I categorically argue against an assumption that these processes occur independently of one another or in isolation. On the contrary, I hypothesize that these processes could all occur simultaneously just as I hypothesize that a speaker may attempt to enact more than one identity at the same time via his linguistic repertoire.

Power and prestige have been linked to identity groups for as long as there have been cultures rooted in inequality and social capital. Identity groups, like personal identities, do not exist in vacuums and are undoubtedly informed by social capital and power structures (Bourdieu 1986, 1991). Gender, sexuality, and race are all informed by the power systems within which they exist and serve to either reproduce or challenge said systems. Thus, power is embedded in the very groups from which we draw our identities and their corresponding linguistic resources. Groups that embody power (Bourdieu 1986)

mark themselves as the “Standard" to which all else must subscribe: the hegemony. Once power norms are established and assigned via relational imbalance, they may surface in a number of forms of capital (Bourdieu 1986) such as the manipulated access of resources or perceived value creating a type of surplus-deficit relation that reinforces the systems of inequality already in play. As prestige is embodied by those with power, all that they represent and ultimately produce take on a type of referential power (French & Rave 1959) marking the features and byproducts of these groups as desirable, while the inverse process occurs for those on the other end of the scale, reproducing a lack of social capital and value for them and their products.

As members of speech communities draw on this capital to enact their identities in interactions, during which they position themselves, speakers maneuver and navigate power norms with the resources that represent and reflect power, notably language. This process surfaces as that of negotiation: the taking, yielding, exhibition, and concealment of power during interactions and exchanges. These negotiations take place through a number of approaches to include stance-taking (Dubois 2007), footing (Goffman 1981) and the interactive positioning of the self and others. Said negotiations are largely informed by the theories of face work (Brown and Levinson 1987), relational identity and identity Negotiation (Ting-Toomey 2015). The purpose of negotiating identity is to ultimately establish “who is who” during an interaction so that speakers are equipped to move around each other based on a mutually established set of expectations. Power norms help explain why conflicts exist among identities that need to be managed within a single repertoire and they fuel the conflicts that need to be negotiated by speakers holding

differing and sometimes opposing memberships. As power norms are established and reproduced via relational imbalance, and since power is highly influential to identity, it would stand to reason that the nature of constructed identity is in a similar way relational.

The treatment of language as an element of power is one that has been thoroughly explored by various scholars (Wodak 1989; Morgan 2002; Van Dijk 2008). Bourdieu (1977, 1991) addresses language as a type of capital or symbolic power which has a major impact on the function of society and the place of the speaker. Language, particularly that of the dominant hegemonic persuasion, is viewed as a representation of a system of power and, subsequently, a type of power in itself. The same could be argued for any language varieties that are referred to as "standard" as is reflected in their legitimation and domination over "non-standard" varieties, particularly within institutions of power (Crawford 1992; Corson 1995; L'eglise & Migge 2007; Blommaert 2010). Given the privileged position of legitimated language (Bourdieu 1977, 1991; Wodak 1989; Morgan 2002; Van Dijk 2008), the presence and persistence of "non-Standard" varieties that exist alongside it or refuse to be stamped out could be interpreted as a threat or an act of aggression against predetermined power dynamics. If one accepts the association between power and the use of Mainstream language, then one must consider which power relations are at play when the "Standard" is not employed by a speaker who holds it in his linguistic repertoire. Is there a type of symbolic capital associated with covert prestige (i.e., the non-Mainstream value associated with non-standard varieties) (Trudgill 1972) and how are these power dynamics at play when they exist within a singular repertoire? How do these power relations motivate linguistic choices? Taking all of this into account,

I frame this investigation within the realm of power dynamics employing Discourse Analysis as a method of contextualizing and more firmly grasping the data found in this dissertation. Because the linguistic resources that are sourced from identity groups take on the referential power with which said groups are associated, they can be considered a symbolic means of reproducing, challenging, and navigating power norms.

One of the objectives of this dissertation then is to observe these processes as part of the negotiation of identity by speakers, specifically to investigate the impact that power norms have on linguistic elements and to determine the ways in which language may be used to reproduce corresponding power structures. In order to achieve this goal, I observe the relational nature of power imbued linguistic resources within the linguistic repertoire as they are employed during moments when Dan must negotiate identity linked power norms with various interlocutors. I investigate how the central speaker of this study uses power softness (via directness or relationship) and laterality (through bilateral interactions or unilateral conversational dominance/silencing) as well. John French and Bertram Raven (1959) defined power as potential influence, the ability one holds to affect others. French and Raven (1959) explored five specific types of power: reward power: (potential influence centered around the ability to give privileges), legitimate power (that which is bestowed upon one by a higher legitimized authority), referent power (potential influence that is rooted in relationship and the ability to identify with one's audience), expert power (that which is granted based on experience and knowledge), and coercive power (that which is often marked as aggression). Though power is typically addressed solely as influence, due to the role of relativity I will be treating it as rooted in positioning

and as a potential means of attaining influence or control. Additionally, I will also consider power as prerogative, a principle that states that the speaker with the power can determine the rules of conversation (turn taking, sufficient content, etc) particularly when analyzing how the central speaker interacts as an interlocutor who has been granted the legitimized power of interviewer.

Speakers draw their identities from the groups within which they hold membership in a manner that is demonstrative, validating, and constructive. There has been much debate about the label for these particular identity groups (Knott 1934; Gumperz 1964; Hymes 1972; Silverstein 1987; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998; Bucholtz 1999; Fordham 1999; Pullum 1999; Smitherman 2006), which are sometimes referred to as speech communities. I would like to take up this term, using it broadly to include the communities that are linked to gender and sexuality as well as race and ethnicity. Speech communities provide a number of resources from which members draw to index membership including that of language. As speakers attempt to index group membership, questions of authenticity and loyalties surface bringing about a requisite to "prove" one's legitimacy in terms of membership through elements sourced from and associated with the community. In the case of this dissertation, these elements would be the symbolic linguistic resources associated with one's speech community.

For all parties involved, group memberships become an identity source from which members draw not only social value but cultural artifacts such as language which have been imbued with referential power and are used to express and reinforce their membership and thus identity. As identity-based community memberships are maintained and

constructed in this manner, the power norms linked to group identities are enacted as well. The subsequent situating of these groups is what leads to hegemonic structures that influence culture, reinforcing power by dictating what is (and is not) culturally valuable and legitimate (Gramsci 1971).

As one employs these linguistic resources, he demonstrates his authenticity, proves his membership (leading to the attainment of social capital), and (in the process) actively constructs his identity. What is unique in the case of a speaker with a multiplex identity is that he holds multiple speech community memberships simultaneously so his construction of one identity may call into question his authenticity within another, running the risk of threatening both memberships. Having to maintain multiple memberships that are potentially in conflict with one another is an act of balance which requires strategic attention paid to each in different ways for different audiences. Taking this into consideration, I draw on the work of John Gumperz (1964) to argue that the linguistic repertoire mirrors that of identity as a single unit also housed within a single speaker and composed of linguistic varieties and elements which are sourced from simultaneous membership in multiple identity groups. These linguistic elements are then used during processes of identity construction to index and maintain these multiple memberships. Part of my overarching goal, then, is to examine how the conflicts between these identities within the repertoire of identity are navigated through the repertoire of language, thus avoiding a fractured sense of self.

In order to explore the use of language in the process of identity construction, I draw from a number of the theoretical approaches that cite identity as performative, en-

acted, and emergent. Judith Butler's work on performative identity focuses almost exclusively on gender and the ways in which we enact it via repetitive behavior (1990). Language and performativity research creates an indelible link between performativity and J.L. Austin's speech act theory, making the association with language and performance clear. Richard Bauman (2011) refers this to as "the creative and emergent product of discursive practice" from a sociolinguistic perspective. William Beeman (2010) places specific emphasis not just on performance as agentive, but as a purposeful enactment for an audience, denoting intentionality and interaction. Taking all of these into consideration, I draw heavily on Judith Butler's discussion of the performative nature of speech as a means of establishing identity.

Discussions surrounding topics such as "Talking Black" (Baugh 2003; Alim and Smitherman 2012; Cornelius 2014; Weldon 2018), or "Sounding Gay" (Gaudio 1994; Van Borsel et. Al 2009; Mack and Munson 2012) point to a very real understanding and acceptance of the role of speech in the performance of identity and could be viewed as acknowledgements that one of the ways in which we effectively perform the self is via language and speech. This hypothesis has been evidenced by several matched guise, perception and imitation studies (Preston 1992; Baugh 2003; Fagyal 2005) that have investigated the detection of racial identity via speech alone. This process of identity construction via linguistic resources associated with identity categories serves to transfer identity to speech elements in a cyclical manner. Further, a number of works cite language, specifically narrative, as crucial to the constructive enactment of identity (Labov &

Waletzky 1967; Gumperz 1977; Coates 2000; Ochs and Caps 2001; Wortham 2003; Bucholtz and Hall 2004; Agha 2005; Beeman 2010).

The Western cultural understanding of Gender is one that has been rooted in essentialism and based largely on the idea of complementarity, finding its foundation in the requisite of heterosexuality, the ultimate goal of which being marriage and reproduction (Cameron and Kulick 2003). The field of Gender Studies directly challenges this treatment, often associated with the following quotation from Simone de Beauvoir "One is not born a woman. One becomes one." This citation points to a constructionist treatment of gender beyond traditional essentialist views as conflated with the sex one is assigned at birth. The area of Gender Studies is composed largely of the subfield of Women's Studies, which came to rise during the Women's Liberation movement when it began to explore gender as a performative construct (Butler 1990) that produces and reproduces privilege and power. Women's Studies, however, is not the full extent of the field of Gender Studies. Men's Studies, came about in the 1980s-90s arguably as a response to the "Men's Rights" movements, taking up the mantle of Women's Studies by challenging the patriarchy and, specifically, heteronormative masculinity as a social construct based in notions of dominance and power (Connell 2005). Our society's treatment of masculinity as composed of power (or aggression) and sexual prowess is directly linked to complementarity, marking the "ultimate man" as one who is powerful and sex-driven. This man must desire sex, more specifically sex with women (plurality is emphasized) as those which he dominates, fusing the ideal of power and male sexuality together.

Heteronormative ideals presuppose not only power differentials as associated with gender (women must be by default powerless in this frame) it also mandates a desire for one's opposite. This requisite of complementarity has arguably led to a conflation of gender with sexuality. For one to sufficiently perform her/his gender s/he must exhibit sexual desire for the opposite sex. The aforementioned stringent means of constructing masculinity all but excludes Gay men and marks them as "less masculine" (often read as feminine by default) for deviating from the prescription. If one does not adhere to the pre-determined means of constructing gender, that person is viewed as "Gay" (regardless of gender) and if s/he does not subscribe to assumed heterosexuality, s/he is viewed as deviant from their gender marking them as less feminine/masculine.

Much like the complementarity approach to gender, earlier treatments of language and gender began largely as comparative analyses of the differences in speech patterns, topic choice, and linguistic cues between women and men. Though cultural differences (Maltz and Borker 1982) have been cited as a justification for the variation in the speech between the two genders, several scholars have shifted their attention to the power dynamics that are expressed and reproduced via language. Robin Lakoff (1975) attempted to explain the differences between the speech of men and women with the claim that they were socialized to use different language forms informed by power differentials. She provided a list of "women's speech" features, that included: "empty adjectives," hedges, the use of hypercorrect grammar (defined as an overshoot at correction to the point of being incorrect) (Labov 1972), and final rising intonation of declarative sentences (an effort to mitigate the force of statements by making them sound like questions). It was Lakoff's

claim that women's upbringing instructed them to speak gently, avoiding any appearance of roughness or aggression, reifying the association of female gender with powerlessness as prescribed by heteronormative complementarity.

As the research on language and gender evolved, attention shifted away from gender differences and their expressions as a primary focus and towards the use of language to express and enact power and dominance (O'Barr & Atkins 1980; DeFrancisco 1991) reflective of the heteronormative complementary gender dyad. The cultural association of power with gender has constructed a system of prescription that would claim that men do not need to adhere to any of the rules of speech linked to politeness. Instead, they are culturally expected to dominate conversations and only take up topics of their choosing (DeFrancisco 1991) using elements like complements to exert power over other speakers, particularly women (Holmes 1995). This motivation to enact power via speech was approached from both audible utterances and through the use of silence. Victoria DeFranciaco's 1991 study of couples' interactions claimed that through a refusal to take up topics presented by women, men placed women in positions where they were either silenced, having their topics of choice ignored altogether, or forced to put extra effort into trying to maintain the conversation. The treatment of language as a mechanism of power was discussed in O'Barr and Atkins (1980), where the authors argued that what had traditionally been viewed as Women's Language (WL) was actually the language of the powerless, thus extending beyond gender. O'Barr and Atkins claimed that men, as well as women, employ powerless language, and through their observations, they attempted to show that the men who performed said speech did so as members of lower social-stand-

ing groups. This, in turn, indicated powerless language as more of a reflection of one's social standing instead of solely an enactment of gender. That said, the idea of power as linked to gender, particularly masculinity, lingers. Candace West (1984) maintained this association of power with language, finding that regardless of social standing, men attempted to exert power through dominating speech such as conversational interruptions, complicating O'Barr and Atkins claim about status.

Deborah Tannen (1990) argued that men and women talk with different purposes, the purpose of male speech being to create a situation of imbalance, dominance, and independence with respect to interlocutors. Male speech is a direct reflection of the power dynamics presumably linked to masculinity and can surface through a number of features, including but not limited to direct speech, interruptions (West 1984), conversational dominance (Holmes 1995; Kiesling 2002), topic control (DeFrancisco 1991), and conversational control via silence, placing the burden of conversation on women (DeFrancisco 1991). While some of the more recent research in language and gender does investigate men's use of language to exert power in conversation (Broadbridge 2003; Holmes and Meyerhof 2003), much of the work has focused on investigating the use of language as power, complicating and subverting gender performed via language in hopes of a more nuanced and in-depth discussion.

While there has been considerable work on men's speech (Kiesling 1996, 2002; Cameron 1997; Johnson & Meinhof 1997; Coates 2001), it has been generally treated as the default speech pattern, marking women's language as a deviation. This is reflected by the sociolinguistic subfield of language and gender being focused largely on the speech of

women as it relates to that of men in various situations and settings (West 1984; O'Barr and Atkins 1980; DeFrancisco 1991). Not only has the preoccupation been with the speech of women, but primarily that of White women (Tannen 1990; Lakoff 1975) to the detriment of research on the speech of women of color, (WOC) with notable exceptions being Troutman 2001; Lanehart 2009; and Morgan 2015, as well as men.

Despite this overwhelming (though limited) preoccupation with the speech of women, the speech of men has become a topic of consideration. Deborah Cameron's 1997 work evaluated the construction of hegemonic masculinity by college-aged men through discourse. She drew on data collected by a former student who claimed that the discussion of men revolved around "wine, women, and sports" and was consequently an integral tool in the performance of masculine talk. Cameron, however, found that these young men actually participated in gossip, a speech event that has stereotypically been ascribed to women and marked as a female linguistic activity. She analyzed a series of interactions between the participants in which they discussed the clothing, behavior, and overall performance of masculinity by other men, referring solely to the "masculine" topics of sports, alcohol, and women tangentially. Cameron explored the conflation of sex with gender and the evaluation of behaviors which did not align with the heteronormative ideologies of masculinity. The participants labeled these deviant behaviors as "Gay" and a failure to measure up to what they had predetermined as legitimate masculinity.

Scott Kiesling (2002) analyzed how a group of fraternity members perform masculinity via power and dominance through their treatment of other men (i.e., Gay and Straight) as well as women. Through discourses that focused on sex as a marker of mas-

culinity and interactions with fraternity members of relatively low standing, the men enacted and exerted dominance through sexist address terms that simultaneously subjugated their fraternity members and women. Kiesling's work evaluated the narratives of a group of fraternity members that enact their various performances of gender identity in the Greek life scene. Through the conflation of sexuality and masculinity, the participants positioned women as sexual objects and Gay men as non-masculine in order to construct their own heteronormative masculinities. Much of this work was accompanied by the use of power and dominance over other fraternity members as well, reproducing the association of sex and dominance with heteronormative masculinity. Kiesling noted that these men were not using language merely to reflect a system of inequality, marking heteronormative masculinity as dominant, but they also reproduce these systems, exerting their own dominance based largely on gender and heterosexuality.

The mores that are alluded to in both this work as well as Cameron's serve to inform evaluations of masculinity in my study. This source also functions as a point of reference with respect to the broader hegemonic prescriptions of the construction and maintenance of masculinity in a heteronormative society. Jennifer Coates (2000) explored the definition of hegemonic masculinity as it is framed in relation to femininity. Coates examined a series of narratives among her participants and explicitly discussed the crucial role that conversational narratives "play in our construction of our identities" as she referenced Kerby (1991). This approach makes her work integral to my own through the use of conversational narrative as a subject of investigation, observing how such narratives participate in the construction of identity. Coates evaluated the discussions of a group of

men and ultimately posited that while the hegemonic discourse of masculinity which surrounds itself with power, physical strength, and heterosexuality is adhered to by many, its very definition and existence are framed around its contrast to other masculinities. This would then infer that there are multiple types of masculinities against which the dominant ideology is relationally compared creating a space for the discussion of intersectionality which is only marginally examined when considering language and gender.

Though it is limited, much linguistic work with respect to the construction and performance of gender has shifted toward the complication of masculinity by challenging the hegemonic discourse surrounding it. In terms of constructing masculinity in relation to sexuality, Rusty Barrett's 1999 work on Drag Queens and their employ of various linguistic features attributed to Black speakers (both male and female) in conjunction with those associated with White women (Lakoff 1975), demonstrated the ability of social actors to draw from their multiplex identities in order to index alternative gender norms. This work evaluated the multi-faceted nature of identity and how it is expressed in various circumstances.

The social mandate of complementarity overtly conflates gender with sexuality, marking anything other than heteronormativity as deviant. As a result, the Gay community has historically been (and still is) systematically mistreated on the grounds of "morality". It was not until 1969 that the silencing of Gay voices as sanctioned by the US Government came to a head during the manifestation of the Stonewall rebellion, signaling the onset of the American Gay Liberation Movement. This period in LGBTQ+ history was one of activism in search of legal rights and would become the genesis of the Gay Pride

Movement. Though state law and public prejudice continued to work against the liberation of the (then) Gay and Lesbian community, members continued to push back, incorporating the rising AIDS epidemic into their struggle and bringing it to the forefront of discussion during the 1980s.

The 1970s and 1980s brought about the social constructionism vs. biological essentialism debate, which examined the influence of societal constructs and identity of sexuality in contrast with "naturally" occurring sexual behavior. The desire vs. identity debate would later spawn the fields of Lesbian and Gay Studies, which focused largely on the history of Gay Studies, rights, and culture alongside Queer Studies, the latter of which focused more on gender as it intersects with sexuality, expanding its scope to include Bisexuality and Transgenderism. The constructionist approach of Queer Studies focused more on identity as a fluid construct beyond the purely essentialist sexual desire and gender binary narratives. Though my attempt is to avoid the use of the essentialized identity term "Gay" in favor of the more constructionist term, "Queer" will not be used to reference the central speaker of this study as I wish to maintain its use as an inclusive term for anyone with a non-conforming or non-heteronormative gender or sexual identity. I thus maintain usage of the term Gay for the sake of specificity (based on Dan's self-identification as a cis male) and the examination of the Gay male experience in particular. Additionally, I use LGBTQ+ to refer to the larger community as a whole treating Gay men as a subset.

This period brought about an academic boom of theoretical models for understanding sexual identity and the coming out process (Dank 1971; Cass 1979, 1984;

Savin-Williams 1988, 1990; Troiden 1989). Cass (1979) developed a six-step process of the formation of Gay identity sin order to accept and embrace that part of themselves in order to integrate this factor into their repertoire of identity. She delineated the process as a transition from identity confusion to identity synthesis via stages of comparison, tolerance, acceptance, ultimately leading up to pride. Cass relied heavily on the role of internal conflict and evaluation in the process of forming identity, a theme which will be explored as both the formation and maintenance of identity. Like Cass, D'Augelli's (1994) lifespan model also presents LGB (D'Augelli's usage) identity formation as a six -tage process transitioning from exiting homosexuality to the entrance into the LGB community. Unlike Cass, D'Augelli model takes into consideration elements such as "self-concept" and "relationship with others." While the processes of identity development may be consistent, in a number of ways, it took a while for researchers to begin to consider Bisexualism (Fox 1995; Klein 1990, 1993) and race (Brown,1997; Gonsiorek 1995). Bilodeau and Renn (2005) addressed these gaps and introduced the impact of both ethnic identity and genderqueer identity in the process of LGBTQ+ identity formation.

Despite the significant contributions to the Gay Rights movement from Queer Black people such as Marsha P. Johnson, Queer people of color (POC) only began to increase in visibility as part of the Gay and Lesbian community during the 1990s, calling out the lack of diversity within said community and its preoccupation with White cisgendered men, particularly during the height of the AIDS epidemic. Larry Icard (1985) explored the experience of Gay Black men as double minorities subjected to the racism of Gay culture and the homophobia of Black culture simultaneously. He cited Julius John-

son (1982) in the creation of the Gay Black/Black Gay distinction based on their identification/orientation to both groups and argued that the requirement to choose an allegiance led to a dual struggle which directly informed identity development due to opposing group membership in communities which significantly influence self-concept.

John Peterson (1992) called for an intersectional approach to Gay Studies to increase the visibility of Black men. He attempted to address this gap in the literature, as well as the lack of knowledge about same-sex behavior among Black men, by exploring a number of situations in which Black men who identified as heterosexual participated in and justified same-sex activities (to include: type of sex, sexual positions, and circumstantial desire). His work pushed the field of study to include Black voices but also brought up the essentialism vs. constructionism debate as it related to sexuality alongside the parallel discussion of sexual desire vs. identity. Peterson explored the conflict between the two identities, reproducing Johnson's (1982) distinction between Gay Black males and Black Gay males via their primary allegiances and relationship habits. Though this approach to the conflict between the two identities can be useful in the examination of the pressure that Gay Black men face, requiring them to choose an allegiance, it should be noted that Johnson's distinction bears its own limitations in that neither option allows for the possibility of equal prioritization or the fluidity among the identities within a multiplex repertoire.

Keith Boykin's (1996) book was another work that called for intersectionality within the Gay community and the inclusion of the narratives and experiences of people of color. Boykin began his work by framing his own coming out experience and high-

lighting the importance of Black identity and membership to those within the Gay and Lesbian community despite the Black community's frequent lack of acceptance. He cited this rejection as contributing to a conflict between the two identities within himself and a constant "search for home" as he "shuttle[d] back and forth between [his] two identities." Boykin outlined the struggles of both Black identity and Gay identity, the homophobia within the former and the racism of the latter, and explored the history of comparison between the two, laying the foundation for his major claim that Gay Black men and Lesbians borrow from parts of their many identities, "[c]reating a unique Black Lesbian and Gay identity, remarkable…for its diversity."

The essentialism vs. constructionism debate of the 1980s was mirrored by the debate over whether such a thing as 'Gayspeak' (Hayes 1981) exists, calling into question whether something simply being done by Gays automatically makes it a Gay thing (Darsey's theorem). The participation in this conversation and the subsequent works of James Darsey (1981), Joseph Hayes (1981), Don Kulick (2000), and William Leap (1994a, 1996) led to what I will refer to as the desire vs. identity debate. Among other scholars, Barrett 1997a, Livia and Hall 1997, Eckert 2002, and Bucholtz and Hall 2004 contributed to the broader discussion, challenging the erasure of sexual identity and treating it as uniquely complex and constructed. As my approach leans towards views of constructionism, I explore a number of linguistic features associated with and used to explore Gay male identity, notably features of GMS (Gay Male Speech) that include but are not limited to the lexical elements, phonology, and cooperative speech.

The earliest discussions of Gay male speech focused largely on lexical items and the "slang" of Gay culture (Niemoeller 1965; Farrell 1972; Rodgers 1972; Ashley 1987,1979; Bardis 1980; Doyle 1982; Grahn 1984; Dynes 1985; Max 1988). Beginning in the 1990s, the analysis of queer speech moved sociolinguistic work beyond gender and into sexuality (Leap 1996, 1996a; Livia & Hall 1997). In an effort to give voice to the queer community, researchers challenged and complicated what they knew queer identity to be. They presented a much more complex view of Gay identity than had been previously discussed, contesting the stereotypes of Gay men as effeminate, weak, and lacking masculinity, through discussions of linguistic gender-bending (Livia & Hall 1997) and the distinguishing of sexuality from gender identity by transexual Gays and Lesbians (Bagemihl 1997). This exploration of GMS tended to avoid rigid feature lists and specific linguistic elements, opting to focus more on the performativity of Gay identity via language (Liang 1999; Barrett 1999; Podesva et. al 2002). Much of the discussion focused on the "Queering" of language, the "construction of imagery and the reconstruction of images along lines that maximize the visibility of Lesbian/Gay/bisexual/transgender content and form" (Leap 1991, 1996a). In addition to lexical items, features of Queer speech include discourse markers, cooperative speech, homoerotic content, innuendo, metaphor, and allusions to Gay culture which were highlighted as a means of confirming the Gay identity of the other as a means of orientation and ultimately enacting Gay identity for oneself via style shifting (Lumby 1976; Barrett 1994b; Boland 1998; Harvey 1998; Baker 2002).

Rogers, Smyth, and Jacobs (2000) analyze people's perception of an association as study participants rated stimuli on a scale of more or less Gay sounding. Sibilants /s/ and /z/ seemed to be indexical of GMS to both Gay and non-Gay participants. Smyth and Rogers (2002) went on to examine several features related to the perception of Gay sounding male voices to include: sibilant duration, voiceless stop aspiration, /l/ velarization, and vowel duration. They argue for the consideration of complex gender beyond the binary, gender differentiation of children and conscious agency of gender performance when investigating language as indexical of sexuality. Munson (2010) sought to further explore the work of Van Borsel et al (2009) taking into consideration the social ramifications and potential of perpetuating stereotypes with the findings that 40% of Gay men lisp. He critiqued several aspects of the study, particularly the definition of lisping as based around higher peak frequency instead of frication.

Mack and Munson (2012) also sought out to tackle the stereotype of the Gay lisp by investigating how speakers were evaluated in terms of sexuality based on their presentation of fronted /s/ finding that speakers were rated as more Gay as well as younger. What is interesting is that Mack and Munson addressed the lack of clarity in definition of what it means to lisp and presented a broader view of the feature by addressing it as misarticulating. By testing how these misarticulations were judged in regard to speech (regardless of whether it was actual "lisping" or not) they make room for a different type of context which could not only explain the discrepancies among the other studies but make space for what "misarticulations" might be considered for speakers of other varieties such as AAL.

Gaudio (1994) examined the stereotype of Gay men's intonation as dynamic in pitch variation usage (not unlike that which has been attributed to women). Though listeners were able to accurately discern speakers' sexuality based on stereotypes (this is evident given their conflation of sexuality with norms of gender as a masculinity/femininity dyad), he found that F_0 was not necessarily the feature they used to determine sexual identity and while intonational variation may be a determining factor, the impact of it was unclear on listeners' judgments. Gaudio (1994) began by addressing the conflation of gender with sexuality and calling out the limitations of a binary approach to either. He also incorporated a Black speaker in his study (though it was alongside seven White speakers) and addressed what Smitherman (1977) termed tonal semantics and the role of intonation in AAL. This incorporation could arguably have been considerably valuable in his analysis had it been further explored. AAL could have contributed a specific Black Gayness that was indexical of both memberships and which might not have been salient for White speakers. Gaudio's (1994) findings that Gay men made use of pitch variation more than their Straight sounding counterparts was reminiscent of Smitherman's (1977) work on tonal semantics by AAL speakers.

A number of the features associated with GMS have been associated with either feminine or powerless speech, reproducing the assumption that any deviation from heteronormative sexuality is indexical of femininity or powerlessness. Graf and Lippa (1995) explored the conflation of gender and sexuality, more specifically femininity as it was linked to Gay male identity, and as it was reflected in the use of Women's Language (WL) (Lakoff 1975) by Gay men. They evaluated the phenomenon beyond stereotypes,

focusing on address terms among friends finding a variation in usage as well as meanings for terms, advocating for a more nuanced approach to our notions of "Gay" and feminine in our evaluations. What was interesting was the overlap of AAL terms within those examined. "Girl," "Girlfriend," and "Miss Thing" are all connected to (if not overtly rooted in) Black culture as address terms among women. This occurrence makes more clear the need to expand our understanding of the use of feminine labels linked to Gay men but also brings into question the impact of racial identity on Gay men who happen not to be White.

Though the work on Gay male speech has made great strides towards challenging stereotypes placed on the LGBTQ+ community, the exploration of Gay Male Speech (GMS) has been rooted in variations of Mainstream American English (MAE) and Gay identity as White by default. It has largely excluded the voices of Gay Black men, to which the virtually invisible body of work concerning Gay Black speech can attest. As is the case with the cultural expectations of Black masculinity, there is a considerable void that denies Gay Black men and their respective varieties full membership in both the Black community and the Gay community, from a scholarly perspective. It is this project's endeavor to help fill said void by complicating our treatment of Gay identity (particularly as it relates to language) to not only include Black identity but in observance of how the two intersect with one another.

Failure to consider race by focusing on presumably White Gay sounding men not only limits the scope of GMS research, it fails to address the complexity of identity within the variety, a point made by Zimman (2013). Recent work seeks to fill the gap of racial

identity incorporated into language and sexuality research including Filipino (Manalansan 1996), Latino (Cashman 2012, 2014), Indian (Davis 2014) and Muslim American men (Afzal 2014). Manalansan (1996) approaches Gay males of different ethnicities as pieces of a mosaic that is the Gay community, exploring the construction of masculinity by Gay Filipino men in relation to said mosaic. Arguing that their lexicon is more than mere words, he cites the language as an uptake and reconfiguration of the social concerns prevalent to them and as a means of constructing their own identities in addition to those of others around them, making sense of their uniquely Gay experience in America. Porter (1995), explores and contests the discourse of homosexuality as completely accepted in Kenya, examining the role of power relations as they relate to gender and status. Rusty Barrett's work on African-American drag queens (1999, 2017), along with Nikki Lane's (2015, 2018) analyses of lexical usage of Queer people of color contribute to this growing body of work. Cornelius and Barrett (2019) explores the maintenance of both Black and Gay identities by a Gay Black male who uses intraspeaker variation as a means of prioritizing different facets of identity, based on the need for preservation against sexualized racism and racialized heterosexism.

The association of Whiteness with privilege is one of the foundational concepts of Critical Race Theory and is demonstrative of a covert type of power embodied by White people. Within the United States, power has been ascribed to groups that have conquered and dominated others. These acts of dominance were committed largely by those who identified as European or White, who have, throughout US history, established themselves as the Mainstream default. Whiteness is now associated with power as the hege-

mony or the norm (Üsekes 2003) from which all else presumably deviates. One of the ways in which this hegemonic structure was established was through the removal of ethnic group variation among European immigrants under the blanket term "White," creating a group membership from which one may derive cultural capital and prestige. The Immigration act of 1790 will attest to this attempt in that it restricted access to US citizenship to "any alien, being a free White person." The desire for privilege such as this has become a requisite of a constructed White identity that is still sought after by White people in America, as is explored in Nancy Isenberg's *White Trash* (2016).

In terms of American culture, the idea of Blackness as a category of identity beyond the assignment of race came to the forefront during the Civil Rights era via the Black Pride movement. This era marked the embrace (and perhaps reappropriation) of the term Black as a celebration of one's holistic identity to include appearance, culture, and support for one's community. During this era "doing" Blackness took the stage as more than just "being" of African descent. Given my constructivist approach to identity, I thus explore the notion of Blackness as a social construct drawn from and enacted through means associated with active membership in the Black community. With this in mind, I distinguish the term Black from African-American, using the former in reference to those who hold expressed and constructed membership within the community and the latter being used for the essentialized racial identity category.

For people of color, notably African-Americans, powerlessness is not necessarily the an ascribed identity attribute, though it is a reflection of the social position they hold as "minorities" in relation to Whiteness. Historically, Black bodies have been associated

with aggression and hyper-dominant behavior (Staples 1982; hooks 2004; Davis 2006; Nedhari 2009; Thomas 2014) in Mainstream America. Because power of any type being linked to a minority conflicts with pre-established power norms, a type of overt hyper-power has been historically attributed to Blackness in a negative manner. Several scholars cite this as an attempt to justify the use of violence against Black bodies (Royster 2011) or as a legitimation of their past enslavement. Historically, hegemonic forces have used the justification of "aggressive" behavior in order to subdue groups that were not culturally allotted power in an effort to maintain already established social dynamics. The narrative of Blackness as a type of wild or unruly power that is a threat to the safety of a fragile hegemony (Whiteness) (e.g. "White Fragility" DiAngelo 2018) and the use of violence against "super-predators" (Gearing and Phillip 2016) as a counter-measure has been sustained and has recently surfaced with the widely publicized killings of unarmed Black bodies by law enforcement officers (Thomas 2014; Donnella 2016) and White vigilante citizens such as Dylan Roof and George Zimmerman. In these cases, groups linked to power are publicly legitimized in the harming of what they perceive to be aggressive Black bodies, reproducing this "hyper-aggressive" narrative evidenced by the ideological commentary during the aftermath of these encounters.

African-American men have been assigned the attribute of hyper-masculinity, this term being descriptive of the one who enacts an overly aggressive, physical and hyper-sexual persona (Staples 1982; Davis 2006; Hopkinson and Moore 2006; McCleod 2009). In this way, Black men would seem to be the embodiment of established norms which associate masculinity with power. These attributes were historically ascribed to Black

men by Europeans based on racial tropes (Staples 1982; Davis 2006). These men were not, however, White, which means the power with which they were associated would likely be one that would take on a negative association. The narrative of the hyper-masculine Black male has been maintained from the era of US slavery to today, as Black men are ever associated with violence, criminal activity, lack of conformity and hyper-sexuality by "nature" in the broader hegemonic culture (Gray 1995; Henry 2004; Hopkinson and Moore 2006). This portrayal of Black men is not the only narrative of Black masculinity, but it is one of the most salient ones which is frequently drawn upon by Whites when discussing their negative ideologies concerning Black men (hooks 2004; Nedhari 2009; Thomas 2014).

The topic of Black masculinity has been explored by several scholars, largely in an effort to counter the tropes of "thugs" and hyper-masculine brutes (Staples 1982; Gray 1995; Henry 2004; Hopkinson and Moore 2006; Davis 2006; Young 2011). Though the stereotype of the "angry Black man" may have been created by Europeans and challenged by several scholars (Gray 1995; Lamm 2003), a significant number of Black men have taken up this stereotype, particularly within the past twenty years, perhaps in association with the rise of Hip-Hop music. The genre has glorified the image of the "thug" or the hyper-masculine persona that was prescribed to males in urban neighborhoods. This masculine figure bases his value on respect, often gained through violence or monetary success (usually through ill-gotten means), which Gray (1995, 402) notes as the "...romanticization of the original gangsta..." in rap music. Just as the "thug" image was em-

braced by some within the Black community, this ideal has been established as one of the ultimate forms of masculinity for non-Blacks as well.

The acceptance of this rigid form of masculinity may be salient but it is not without precedent. The Black Pride era, while making a significant dent in the Mainstream narrative of Whiteness as the Mainstream norm and overall barometer of value, proved to be problematic with regard to gender and sexuality. The overarching narrative during the historical fight for freedom post-abolition has been to prioritize Black men as the leaders and direct benefactors of the race, particularly in the Civil Rights and Black Nationalist Movements (henceforth referred to collectively as "The Movement"), who would receive liberation while the rights of all others, notably those of women and Black Queer people, would follow behind. The Civil Rights era was pervaded by the simple term "I am a Man" as millions of Black men marched across this nation's capital and countless other cities in protest of systemic abuse and in a quest for their rights. While this movement was invaluable to the journey of Black liberation, the approach was not only exclusively male-led but was cis-het (cis gendered and heterosexual) male-centric which was highly problematic, treating Blackness as male and Straight (McBride 1999).

There is an assumed requirement to prioritize one's Black identity because of the efforts put in place to restore Blackness given the history of treatment of Black bodies in the US and globally. This requirement extends to gender, sexuality, and any other potentially conflicting identity. This is the commonly cited rationale for the conflict between Blackness and feminism, being treated as a threat to "Black unity." It comes as no surprise then that a Black man who is Gay could be similarly viewed as "threat" to Black

identity. Further, it is not unheard of for people within the Black community to refer to the “Gay Agenda” as a means of limiting the reproduction of the Black race allowing for White dominance.

Richard Pitt (2010) considered the cultural conflation of gender with sexuality and the “threat” of weakening Black masculinity as is reflected in commonly used terms such as “punk” and “sissy.” Further, Pitt explored the hegemonic definition of masculinity as rooted in a man’s ability to provide financial support, his social-political influence, and his ability to procreate. Citing the first two as often beyond the reach of many Black men due to systemic racism, he points to sexuality as the most feasible means of constructing a legitimized Black masculinity. The gender/sexuality conflation leads to the legitimation of heterosexuality in that it is seen as a strengthening agent for Black men. Sexuality, particularly heterosexuality, has become a key way of expressing and maintaining “acceptable” Black identity which would position anything other than heterosexuality as problematic at best and a direct threat to Black Liberation at worst. The hegemonic conflation of gender with sexuality marks Gay men as problematic under the assumption that they are a threat to efforts of preserving an already fragile Black masculinity (Fields et. Al 2015) because to be Gay is to be read as “less powerful." This supposed threat is then counterproductive to the efforts of The Movement and all that it has attempted to do to strengthen the image of Black people (read men) in America. Despite the significant contribution of Gay men to the Movement, they were often excluded or closeted having their intersectional concerns placed on the back burner. Several Gay men have expressed the conflict they felt in situations such as these and their inability to stand back and do

nothing while Black men were being killed despite their culture's blatant homophobia and silencing of Gay Black voices. This sentiment still rings true today with prominent Gay Black men such as Deray McKesson holding significant influence in movements such as Black Lives Matter (BLM). Ironically enough, the impact of Gay Black men such as McKesson in public narratives has almost effectively overshadowed the efforts of the Black women who founded and sustain BLM.

Religion has become critical to Black cultural identity (Pew 2008) as "the Church" has been a safe haven for African-Americans in countless ways. Churches were where clandestine schools were housed and where many HBCU's (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) were later founded. They were vital stops on the Underground Railroad (Appiah and Gates 1999) , sources of the spiritual and emotional strength necessary to withstand the atrocities of slavery, sources of any type of positive identity, and a place where Black people felt they could progress, learn, and "be somebody" in a world that insisted that they were less than nothing. The Church, in short, quickly became the center of Black communities, an oasis to which Black people could retreat from the physical, mental, and emotional anguish of existence America. Ironically, the very religion African-Americans clung to as a means of survival is arguably a direct byproduct of the institution which held them in bondage (i.e. the church). The church was not only a source of spiritual inspiration and Black esteem. Because preachers were held in high esteem by their parishioners and in the eyes of White people as at least somewhat advanced Blacks (due to their intellectual edge, charisma, and oratory skills), they were often de facto leaders at the forefront of The Movement (Appiah and Gates 1999). This meant that

Christianity directly informed Black Nationalism and the sanctioned means of doing Black masculinity, reproducing the association of masculinity with power and dominance (Kimmel 1995; Pitt 2010).

Elijah Ward (2005) argues that the association between the Black church and Black identity helped reinforce homophobia within the community. In analyzing the commentary and sermons of several Black clergy members in an effort to examine this relationship and its role in perpetuating heterosexism for Black people, Ward found religion to be a factor, but not the sole factor in Black heterosexism, as participants also cited the historical sexual exploitation of Black bodies and race survival as contributing factors complicating the narrative of homophobia within the Black community. Fear of fulfilling the hyper-sexual "buck" trope attributed to Black men via racism as well as a need to maintain Black masculinity as a formidable opposition against White supremacy (reproducing another racist trope associating Black masculinity with aggression), the conflation of gender and sexuality proves to play a critical role in the maintenance of Black homophobia. This dynamic is not unfamiliar and points to a constant need to navigate a complex identity, which is the hallmark of double-consciousness (DuBois 1903). Attempting to reject racism yet taking up part of the racist narrative to preserve a part of one's identity (in this case, masculinity) leads to an extremely complex sense of self.

There is a general assumption that the Christianity that African-Americans hold so dearly is a result of exposure via slavery, introducing an inherent conflict. From missionaries invading Africa and contributing to the onset of colonization to justifying the forced removal of Black bodies from their homes, White Christianity has been quite problematic

in that its introduction to Black people has been doused in racist ideology. Assumptions that Black people had neither prior exposure to Christianity nor a sense of religion beyond Pagan practices (and thus no humanity) played a significant role in justifying why they should be enslaved, a notion which was reiterated through Biblical justifications as "God's will." It should be acknowledged that there are pro-Black people who openly reject Christianity as "the White man's religion" because of the historical association of Christianity with oppression.

Given the complex relationship between African-American culture and religion, despite the many contradictions that surface, piety in a Christianity that is rooted in and which cyclically justifies heteronormativity has the potential to create a direct animosity between Gay identity and the Black Church. Research has shown a direct link between Black piety and homophobia (Herek and Capitanio 1995; Ward 2005) and given the role of religion in the creation and maintenance of Black identity, this comes as no surprise. This connection leads to the assumption that homophobia is rampant within the Black community (Brandt 1999; Lewis 2003).

Drawing on research suggesting that Black people are disapproving of homosexuality (Lewis 2003), Pitt (2010) explored the role of religion in the assumed ethnic differences picking up where Lewis left off. He particularly examined heteronormative performances of gender in relation to the Black church. Pitt examined how Gay Black men within the church navigate the aforementioned conflicts through strategies of rejecting one or more identities or the compartmentalization of each. These men maintained their commitment and involvement in their respective churches and, if their sexuality was

known in any way, they sought acceptance by adhering to the respectability of the church, acknowledging it as an "abomination" from which they were actively seeking relief and for which they were seeking forgiveness, likely through their abundant church involvement. Pitt found that these men were completely unlikely to reject their religious beliefs, often opting to silence their sexuality by praying for "deliverance" or, at the very least the wherewithal, "toning down" their Gay performance among certain people regulating their personal lives to outside of the church. Many who insisted on preserving their Gay identities ended up leading these "double lives" separately. However, there is the option of integrating these two seemingly conflicting identities by viewing their sexualities as the way God made them and even using scripture to justify their love.

Valera and Taylor (2011) also explored the relationship between the Black church and homosexuality by investigating the religious based experiences of Black men who have sex with men. They examined the role of the church in the survival of slavery and racism, highlighting the subsequent importance of religion to Black culture. Like the men in Pitt's (2010) study, these subjects embraced the religion of their culture with active involvement, expressing the importance of the church to their identities. In addition, they too accepted the narrative of homosexuality as a sin and prayed for deliverance from it, treating their sexual desires as an affliction. The study explored the "hate the sin, not the sinner" narrative that effectively silences Gay Black men by regulating their identities to a sin to be concealed at best and eradicated at worst and separating this vital part of their identities from their sense of self. Because of this, these men express the need to hide this

part of who they are, creating double lives that conflict with and are exclusive of one another.

Elijah Ward (2005) continued by exploring the silencing of Gay identities by the Black churches, not as a direct hatred of the community, but more as a pressure to maintain a certain image, forcing Gay Black men to censure and silence their presentations of any trace of "femininity". This conflation and preoccupation with heteronormative gender performances appear to be paramount in the homophobia of the Black community. The concern seems to be less about what happens in the bedrooms of these men and more about the maintenance of the image of strength for Black masculinity. This notwithstanding, the experience of Gay identity for African-Americans has been a limited one and given this lack of connection and strong link between religion and Blackness, unlike the seemingly managed conflicts presented between a Eurocentric church and Black identity, the conflicting relationship between the LGBTQ+ community and Black identity via the church leads to what seems to be the only possible solution: animosity (Hutchinson 1999; Valera and Taylor 2011).

Dwight McBride (1999) explored the notion of Black authenticity begging the question, "Who has the authority to speak on behalf of the Black community?" He critiqued the community's use of racial essentialism to legitimize designated speakers, particularly defining "real" Blackness as male and heterosexual and in turn excluding those who do not fit the prescription. McBride examined a number of works to include bell hooks' 1989 essay "Homophobia in Black Communities" laying a foundation for a call

against limiting labels and justifying the expansion of Black discourse via intra-group diversity.

From the male-centric presence of the Civil Rights era and Black Power movements to the Million Man March's all but overt exclusion of Gay men, the very movements designed to uplift Blackness overtly reproduced the same sexist and heteronormative ideologies concerning masculinity, heterosexuality, and power that were so embedded in the Mainstream American culture that they contested. Darren Hutchinson's (1999a) work is a review of the history of the treatment of Gays and Lesbians during the Million Man March and that history's reflection of the larger issue of homophobia within the Black community. He made a call for a "more complex understanding of race" to include sexuality arguing that homophobia and racism both inform and reinforce one another. Carbado (1999) critiqued both the Gay rights and Black rights movements as limiting in their narratives, excluding the experiences of their respective Black Gay members and creating a false opposition between the two communities, reproducing a narrative of Blackness as heterosexual and homosexuality as White by default. He argued that neither Black anti-racism nor pro-Gay rights take into consideration the Black Gay males who hold membership in both communities. Henry Louis Gates' 1993 essay explores the historical connection between the Harlem Renaissance and the British cinematic piece "Looking for Langston" which followed a half-century later, claiming that the Harlem Renaissance (a movement crucial to Black identity) was "surely as Gay as it was Black." He explored the homophobia associated with Black nationalism and the interaction of British cinema with said history, challenging it and the essentialist nature of Black sexu-

ality during both the Renaissance and Black power movements. Earl Hutchinson (1999) explored Black attitudes towards homosexuality as in direct conflict with one another as is reflected in the heterosexism of Black culture, particularly Afrocentrism. He examined a number of justifications presented for said homophobia by heterosexual Black men in particular as they reproduced the notion of a racialized masculinity rooted in a hetero-normative hyper-sexual ideal.

These conversations point to the reproduction of the notion that Gay identity is White by default (or non-Black at the very least), a belief against which the LGBTQ+ community of color still fights. Phillip Harper (1993) explored the African-American community's then preoccupation with the nationally renowned reporter, Max Robinson both before and after his AIDS-related death. He examined both the love of and reaction to Robinson by White and Black communities, the former having been enamored with his eloquence, good looks and ability to placate White fragility. The latter of which was impressed with his success, sexual prowess, and allegiance to the Black community (within limits of professional respectability). According to friends and family, Robinson wanted his death to be a source of education about AIDS, particularly within the Black community but despite this wish, the Black community, in particular, focused more on the uptake of the narrative of a Black man as a hyper-heterosexual "walking phallus" (Hernton 1965) in order to quell any suspicion that Robinson may have contracted the virus from Gay sex. This article brings to light and challenges the virtual requisite of homophobia in order to index Black masculinity, reproducing several narratives, namely the hyper-heterosexual trope of Black masculinity as well as that of Gay as White. This requisite also

excludes Gay men from the narrative of Black masculinity, reproducing the conflation of gender and sexuality and the notion that not being Straight is equivalent to not being a man and, in this case, not being an adequate Black man. Strayhorn and Tillman-Kelly (2013) conducted a study of Black Gay men in College investigating ways in which Black Gay male undergraduates (BGMU) construct their masculine identities. More specifically, they investigated the role of beliefs about Black masculinity affecting their identity development. Strayhorn and Tillman-Kelly found that BGMUs enacted their sense of masculinity in one of three ways: the uptake of traditional heteronormative masculinity, challenging and rejecting said norms, or being influenced by other social factors such as religion and social identity.

As mentioned above, there is a commonly held misconception that being Gay is not only a part of the "White agenda" to limit Black reproduction, but that the idea of non-heteronormative sexuality is a White creation and import. It should be noted that Gay identity is not new to Black people both in the United States as well as historically across the continent of Africa (Appiah and Gates 1999). Non-heteronormative sexual behavior was not only existent in many pre-colonial African countries, it was often accepted, perhaps not always fully embraced, and at least quietly tolerated. There is a cultural rejection of non-heteronormative sexuality for Black people with the assumption that Gay equals White by default. This rejection, in conjunction with several other elements, leads to a conflict between Black identity and Gay identity and often contributes to a forced allegiance via which one must choose, creating a necessity to prioritize one identity over the

other. This phenomenon is what grossly contributes to the Gay Black versus Black Gay dilemma posed by Julius Johnson (1982).

Lewis' (2003) comparative analysis of attitudes based on race and attitude origins is often cited when addressing the assumption of homophobia within the Black community. He explored the assumptions of disparity and the impact of religion, education, and other demographic elements to be taken into consideration. Initially finding that attitudes do differ based on race he found that they were not in a manner that supports the blanket assumption that Black people are more homophobic across the board. While Black people were found to be disapproving of homosexuality, citing the importance of religion within the Black community and the significant impact it plays in their disapproval, the study also found that education went a long way towards counteracting this religious-based belief. Despite these views, Black people were found to be against the legal discrimination and oppression of the LGBTQ+ community and supportive of Gay rights in general. The major exception, however, was the claim that the LGBTQ+ community was seeking "special privileges" in the quest for Gay marriage. In some cases, the Black community has treated the Gay Liberation Movement as in conflict with their own liberation and, at times, viewed it as a direct threat accusing it of equating the Gay struggle with Black liberation and drawing on the rhetoric of the Civil Rights movement (Boykin 1996).

Lewis found, however, no direct disdain towards the Gay community. There appears to be less direct oppression of Gay people and more of a silencing of the Gay voices within the Black community which is reflected in a cultural tolerance accompanied by a "keep it in the closet" admonition to be followed both within the larger culture and the

Church. Whatever the case, because of White racism and Black homophobia, Gay Black men end up between a rock and a hard place as, what Larry Icard (1985) classified, double minorities.

William Alexander (2004) investigates the impact of pressure from multiple conflicting expectations on mental health for Gay Black men as a result of multiple memberships within both the Gay and Black communities . He points to the heterosexism which seems to be embedded in Black culture and the concern with conflicting identity memberships. He pushes beyond this discussion by investigating whether or not they impact rates of depression and hypothesizing that there exists a correlation between negative racial and sexual identity and depression. His findings indicate that each identity individually influences depression rates and, in combination, the conflict between the two are likely to increase depression due to the pressure to adhere to both identity groups and negotiate the prejudices that accompany them. This study serves to legitimize the resonant call for a more intersectional approach to racial and sexual identities, reconciling the two for the sake of identity as well as mental health.

Because race, particularly Whiteness, is linked to hegemonic power and marked as the norm, the speech of this group is valued as Mainstream and, by default, dominant over all non-Mainstream varieties in terms of cultural capital. Speech which is legitimized is directly tied to speakers who are deemed valuable, in this case, White people, who are considered the source of social and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1991). As these speakers embody power and privilege, the same dominance is transferred to their speech, marking it as the “standard” and considering all other varieties “non-Standard” or incor-

rect (Baugh 2000), lazy, (Pullum 1999), less intelligent (Jensen 1969; Farrell 1984a), and at times even deviant or a threat to the “Standard” which must be subdued. “Standard” marked language varieties are legitimized by institutions of power and often presented as "correct" speech. This presumed incorrectness links an imbalance of prestige to varieties as cultural capital (Bourdieu 1977, 1991). The tension between “Standard” and “non-Standard” varieties (Knott 1934; Silverstein 1987; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998; Fordham 1999; Pullum 1999; Smitherman 2006) persists due to linguistic ideologies.

Non-standard varieties of English have been widely criticized and often associated with lower social classes or “inferiority” by those with social capital when compared with the use of the agreed upon Mainstream “standard.” These criticisms are often thinly veiled negative evaluations of the speakers who use the language instead of descriptions of the linguistic resources themselves. This issue is of particular significance for members of marginalized ethnic groups who exist in spaces that have either been colonized or are subcultures of larger hegemonic societies. This complicated existence is often navigated with the help of complex linguistic systems, incorporating multiple varieties housed within linguistic repertoires in order to manage multiple identity group membership. Otsuji and Pennycook (2010) propose the idea of metrolingualism — the management of linguistic practices across cultural, historical, and political boundaries. This appears to be a viable option for speakers who must navigate social settings via the use of language repertoires. While metrolingualism is a valuable approach, it can create issues such as conflicting allegiances between one’s cultural/ethnic and national identities during moments of identity formation. As one example, Bailey (2001) explored the use of various

linguistic resources by Dominicans in the enactment of their complex identities, which included the performance of a national Hispanic-ness and the rejection of presumed Blackness, as immigrants with dark skin in America. Roth-Gordon (2007) investigated similar phenomena in studying the use of the term "playboy" by Black male youth in Brazilian Portuguese slang as a method of contesting the hegemonic ideology that presents these males as less valuable or less important based on their race. This conflict is also not uncommon for biracial Americans who are both African-American and White. Alim and Smitherman (2011) analyzed the public perception and response to the use of African-American English (AAL) by President Barack Obama in his personal and political interactions, finding that his use of both AAL and the "Language of Wider Communication" as a rhetorical device allowed him to connect with various constituents and negotiate his complex identity as a biracial man.

It is no surprise that because MAE is linked to hegemony and Whiteness as "the Standard" it carries its own cultural capital and power while African-American English (AAL) has been viewed as mirroring the tropes of hyper-masculinity and violence with which Black men in particular are associated (Bucholtz 1999; Hill 2008). Mainstream society has not only vilified non-Mainstream varieties such as AAL as crude and unwanted, but it has also perpetuated the myth of such varieties as illegitimate or unsystematic, feeding the academic need for strategic essentialism (Baugh 1999; Bucholtz 2003).

At its onset, the linguistic exploration of African-American English (AAL) was largely restricted to descriptions of the vernacular speech of young, urban, working-class males (Labov 1966, 1972; Wolfram 1969; Fasold 1972), as an attempt to legitimize the

variety in the eyes of those who denigrated it as a marker of lesser intelligence (Jensen 1969; Farrell 1984a) by demonstrating its uniformity and thus systematicity (Baugh 1999). This association of AAL with young Black men was arguably a contributing factor in the use of the variety to index Black masculinity. Cited as a type of "resistance discourse" or "counter-language" (Smitherman 2006), AAL may not be treated specifically as aggressive speech, but as language linked to power, which could be interpreted as aggressive by a Mainstream culture that devalues it. In association with the young Black male bodies at the center of seminal research, AAL (particularly AAVE) has been interpreted as aggressive speech, violating Mainstream politeness norms (Spears 2001, Troutman 2001). Direct speech, more particularly authenticity, and "realness" are highly valued speech elements for AAL speakers, particularly within the Black community. Denise Troutman (2001) discusses how Black women are often viewed as being assertive or outspoken through the 'reading dialect,' issuing extensive direct and explicit criticism, smart talk, and playful banter (Green 2002). One example of this type of directness is the discursive act of "calling out" a speaker by directly drawing attention to a flaw or undesired behavior, which violates politeness norms for those in the Mainstream, but is a social norm for many African-Americans. Despite the negativity of being treated as inferior, like that of many non-Mainstream varieties, AAL carries covert prestige (Trudgill 1972) and is used by speakers of varying ethnicities to index masculinity. Bucholtz (1999) and Chun (2001) investigated the use of AAL by non-African-Americans in the construction of identity (i.e., specifically the performance of masculinity by non-African-American males in the US). The comparatively small body of work concerning male speech has

evaluated the use of language in the construction of masculinity almost exclusively with regard to White men, ignoring Black masculinity. Bucholtz 1999; Bucholtz & Lopez 2011; and Chun 2001 demonstrate how non-African-American men draw on the association of Black men with hyper-masculinity in order to perform their own masculine identity through linguistic crossing (i.e., not using language associated with one's ethnic group (Rampton 1995) into adaptations of aspects of Black culture. Bucholtz and Lopez (2011) specifically addressed this phenomenon as minstrelsy as it was performed in Hollywood films. They evaluated the films "4' down the House" (Shankman 2003) and "Bulworth" (Beatty 1998) and the White lead actors' use of African-American English (AAL) and "Black" mannerisms to perform their masculine personae. In these films, Steve Martin and Warren Beatty respectively are observed adopting a type of "Blackness" as they evolve from "lame" White guys to "down" figures through rap, the use of AAL, Hip-Hop clothing, and participation in various speech events.

While efforts at what Bucholtz (2003) referred to as "strategic essentialism" were rooted in good intentions, the limited focus erased space for variation within AAL, rendering invisible several sub-varieties including Middle-Class AAL (MCAAL), African-American Women's Language (AAWL), and Gay Male Speech (GMS). In recent years, linguists have revisited and expanded their definitions of AAL through the exploration and inclusion of said varieties (Linnes 1998; Barrett 1999; Troutman 2001; Malinson and Childs 2007; Rahman 2008; Alim and Smitherman 2012; Britt & Weldon 2015, and Cor-

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4 In keeping with cultural and linguistic orthography, I will represent nasal fronting as the absence of the final /g/ and insertion of an apostrophe in its stead.

nelius and Barrett 2019, Weldon (forthcoming)). However, there remains little to no research concerning the language of Gay Black men. A tapered preoccupation with African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) has functioned much like the fixed definitions of Black masculinity by ignoring variation within Black masculinity, and effectively excluding all who do not strictly conform to said ideological behavior, including Gay Black men. Part of this work's endeavor is to not only include these voices but to contribute to the broadening of the definition and understanding of Black masculinity and Blackness overall. Speakers who exist within multiple cultures are provided multiple resources, community memberships, and a number of power dynamics to navigate.

2.2 INTRASPEAKER VARIATION

The exercise of intraspeaker variation presumes the existence of a linguistic repertoire consisting of multiple linguistic codes and resources (Myers-Scotton 1988; Heller 1995). This process has been most commonly referred to in terms of bilingualism and diglossia, as code-switching, cited as a means of navigating social elements. Blom and Gumperz (1972) argued there to be a link between linguistic variation, specifically the elements selected, and identity. More specifically, they argued that the elements within a speaker's linguistic repertoire act as symbolic of social identity. Similarly, Myers-Scotton argued for social consequences as motivating factors for code-switching while Monica Heller's (1995) work drew on that of Bourdieu as she analyzed the use of linguistic resources to negotiate around power, implying an association between the two.

Eckert and Rickford (2001) treated intraspeaker variation as style, giving way to a number of definitions and approaches. Their efforts to expand our definition of style al-

lowed for a more porous view of the relationship among linguistic elements linked to different varieties and the social impact that accompanies them. Judith Irvine's (2001) work placed an emphasis on differentiation as a definition of style arguing for a shift of focus on the relational nature between styles (linguistic registers and varieties). Her argument coincides with my work in that we both advocate for an approach that would take into consideration context as critical to understanding linguistic variation. The above works focused more on the "what" of intraspeaker variation, debating its nature as language, code, or style. A significant amount of effort was spent attempting to classify and label the event of intraspeaker variation. More recent work examines the "how" of intraspeaker variation as a functioning mechanism bringing to the fore questions of mixing, switching, meshing, etc. The process of employing intraspeaker variation has borne a number of titles. Carol Myers-Scotton (1988) addressed the concern with the labeling of intraspeaker variation, noting the intentional use of the term "mixing" for what she refers to as "switching." She addressed the confusion associated with this term when it is not, however, used in the same manner, critiquing it as implicative of "unprincipled chaos." Barbara Johnstone's (1996) focus on the linguistic individual hones in on the concept of intraspeaker variation by observing the phenomena of discursive turns and their extensive complexity in language resources by a sole speaker as an act of identity construction. Eckert and Rickford (2001) addressed intraspeaker variation beyond the strict and distinct switches between codes and labeled the process "style shifting," expanding their scope to include multiple varieties as well as audience, identity construction, and register. Vershawn Young's (2011) work expanded treatment of intraspeaker variation by rejecting the

single-faceted "switching" theory in favor of what he calls "code meshing," the simultaneous mixture of two varieties as one draws from them each in concert. John Gumperz (1964) described the verbal repertoire as composed of "all the accepted ways of formulating messages" to include dialects and languages. He explained the notion of the verbal repertoire in terms of the individual, though he applied it to communities in his 1964 paper. I draw on the work of Gumperz, employing the same repertoire concept to refer to the amalgamation of linguistic resources that are sourced from identity groups and used to construct, maintain, and negotiate identity. Said resources are similarly housed within a single repertoire and exist in complex and potentially conflicting relationships with one another, mirroring the repertoire of identity. She described the compositions of linguistic elements as ethnolinguistic repertoires, drawing from Gumperz and placing emphasis on how diverse linguistic features are drawn from varying language sources and pieced together to function in a type of bricolage arrangement (i.e., a construction composed of multiple diverse elements). Benor's approach is an expansion of the concept of linguistic repertoires (originally referred to as verbal repertoires in Gumperz 1964) as a "set of language varieties used in the speaking and writing practices" that focuses specifically on the linguistic resources linked to the performance of ethnicity and code-switching. Because of the limitations of viewing intraspeaker variation as distinct switching between varieties, in addition to the limitations presented in the use of linguistic labels themselves, I would like to adopt the approaches of Gumperz and Benor by applying the "repertoire" approach to my analysis of how a single speaker uses language to negotiate and perform

his identity, expanding the label to include not only ethnicity but also gender and sexuality.

The overall treatment of intraspeaker variation has drawn on the general belief that linguistic resources are manipulated by speakers as a means of navigating various social settings (Fishman 1965; Blom and Gumperz 1972), topic (Labov 1966, 2001; Fishman 1965; Baugh 2000), and cultural memberships of groups defined by their gender, sexuality, race, etc. This navigation may be motivated by a number of factors but the interactive nature of speech community maintenance and audience design have been frequently cited as significant motivators for intraspeaker variation. Allan Bell (1984) argued that, "All stylistic variation is a product of audience design." A number of seminal works in the subfields of variationist Sociolinguistics and second language acquisition have argued for the induction of code-switching as very much dependent on social dynamics presented by interlocutors and addressees (Fishman 1965; Myers-Scotton 1988; Heller 1995; Ervin-Tripp 2001; Labov 2001) as well as the topic (Fishman 1965; Labov 1966, 2001; Baugh 2000). I would like to expand this definition of audience design to include the myriad of seminal works which have adequately demonstrated that the induction of intraspeaker variation is significantly dependent not just on audience but on the social dynamics presented by interlocutors and addressees (Fishman 1965; Myers-Scotton 1988; Rickford and McNair-Knox 1994; Heller 1995; Ervin Tripp 2001; Labov 2001) as well as the topic (Fishman 1965; Labov 1966a, 2001; Baugh 2000). Heller (1995) discussed the politics of code-switching by evaluating the resources available to social actors and the potential social and political ramifications of the use of particular language

codes. Blom and Gumperz (1972) and Fishman (1965) explored the concept of situational switching as the choice of language and adaptation of one's code based on social situations linking language to social factors. Linguistic ideologies that motivate code-switching and style shifting, are informed by cultural memberships and the values attributed to language varieties are often a reflection of power dynamics assigned to the communities of practice within which they belong (Knott 1934; Millhauser 1952; Silverstein 1987; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998; Fordham 1999; Pullum 1999; Smitherman 2006).

The above research grossly motivates my choice to analyze the linguistic variation of a single individual with a multiplex identity (and corresponding linguistic repertoire) to demonstrate how said identities and varieties mesh together but are distinct and must be examined interactively to better understand how they function in context with one another. I seek to explore the usefulness of discourse analysis as a tool for examining multiple social dynamics embodied by speakers as motivation for audience designed code-switching or intraspeaker variation, hypothesizing that speakers are switching because they are negotiating around and positioning themselves in relation to other speakers, more so in relation to the power that people and identity groups embody and represent. Linguistic ideologies that motivate code-switching and style shifting, are informed by cultural memberships and the values attributed to language varieties are often a reflection of power dynamics assigned to the communities of practice within which they belong (Knott 1934; Millhauser 1952; Silverstein 1987; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998; Fordham 1999; Pullum 1999; Smitherman 2006). Drawing from Bourdieu's (1977) claim that, "social structure (and power) is present in each interaction and thus our discourse"

and taking into consideration the above-mentioned assignments of power to various identity categories, I would like to expand the discussion of audience design as motivation for intraspeaker variation beyond the audience as persons, to include the identities and power dynamics that speakers embody and carry into discourse and interaction. The significant role of power will be highlighted largely in my analytical methods, using Discourse Analysis (DA) to examine the use of language taking into account outside factors like the above-mentioned.

Lastly, though I have used the terms WL, GMS, and AAL and have referred to linguistic features attributed to them, the limitations of such labels are quite confining, particularly when they are employed by those who find membership in intersecting identity groups. While I continue to use these labels as a reference point when addressing variables that are potentially associated with particular varieties and identity groups, I expand my discussion beyond them in an attempt to explore how a single speaker may use more than one variety or even use features that blur the lines between linguistic categories making it difficult to link to one specific variety. The limitations of these labels expand into the limitations of how we understand intraspeaker variation and cognitive representations of language. By moving beyond the limits of these labels, I hope to be able to observe linguistic features in interaction with one another and in the context of the speaker's actions to better understand to which variety they may belong at any given discursive turn. It should be noted that, though I do not limit myself to these labels, we cannot address them as a type of formless blend, disregarding the groups to which language is attributed or from which it may be sourced. Furthermore, if we are to pursue the reper-

toire approach and the multiplex nature of elements therein, then we should be mindful of the potential conflict existing between said elements and the need to choose among them as evidence that though features may blur lines, they still hold some semblance of domain and individuality. Just as a speaker who is Gay, Black, and male does not cease to become any of those identities due to his multiple memberships, the linguistic features he employs should not be expected to become completely label-less due to their complex co-existence. They are linked yet still distinct. Further, I make a conscious effort to shy away from the language of "switching" and "shifting" as they presume a linear or singular means of using language to construct identity. If we treat intraspeaker variation in any way as reflective of identity formation, working from the hypothesis that it is created in a multiplex, nuanced fashion, we must maintain focus on a more nuanced and complex approach to intraspeaker variation.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

As the goal of this dissertation is to examine the role of intraspeaker variation in the construction of identity (namely its negotiation, maintenance, and performance) the following methods were designed to induce intraspeaker variation alongside moments of said construction. This was done primarily via the introduction of various interlocutors and conversational topic control.

3.1 PARTICIPANTS

The primary focus of this project was Dan[5], an African-American Male who self-identified as Gay and lived in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Dan grew up on Chicago's Southside and had recently moved to Atlanta (at the time of the study) for his first semester of college at the University where the study was conducted. He and I met through a mutual friend who shared an association with the local campus LGBTQ+ organization. Given the need for a speaker with multiple salient and constructed identity group memberships, I chose Dan as the central focus of investigation primarily because of his multiplex identity as a Gay Black man and his identity memberships within the LGBTQ+ and Black communities both on campus and off.

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[5] Dan was the central speaker's chosen pseudonym. All names mentioned in this dissertation are pseudonyms chosen by each participant with the exception of Jabari, whose chosen pseudonym was changed after it became a stage name that was too closely linked to his real identity.

In addition to inducing moments of identity construction, one of the goals of this study was to observe the use of language during Dan's identity construction, thus creating a need to facilitate intraspeaker variation by Dan. Intraspeaker variation implies access to a number of linguistic resources at the disposal of a single linguistic individual. If a speaker holds multiple identity group memberships, he also has multiple sources for resources needed to construct his identities. Bell (1984) argued that "all stylistic variation is a product of audience design," a premise which served as the foundation upon which I structured the methods of this study given the already established role of interlocutors around which Dan would navigate. Considering the impact of audience on intraspeaker variation and the interactive nature of identity management and negotiation, the incorporation of interlocutor shifts proved to be useful for fostering moments of identity formation and corresponding linguistic shifts. Each interlocutor shared at least one identity membership with Dan (gender, sexuality, or race). Additionally, interlocutors also presented identity memberships not shared with Dan which introduced moments requiring negotiation around power norms as they are associated with identity categories via stance and alignment practices.

In order to get a holistic understanding of how the various identities embodied by Dan informed one another, and how they were constructed through language, I needed to create an environment in which the identity memberships in question were brought to the fore. I, therefore, introduced a number of interlocutors who held differing memberships to which Dan could orient himself. Given the relational nature of identity, particularly the processes of construction, and the role of audience in the induction of intraspeaker varia-

tion, the introduction of interlocutors who did and did not share common identity memberships with Dan were critical for the induction of intraspeaker variation for observation.

As mentioned above, the construction of identity was considered in terms of three processes -- those of negotiation, maintenance, and performance. In order to negotiate his multiplex identity, Dan was positioned to navigate the element of power within a number of interactions. This was achieved by introducing interlocutors who held different power-based identity memberships relating to gender, sexuality, and race, thus requiring participants to negotiate around one another. Contrastively, in order to maintain his memberships (defined as indexing solidarity with one's identity group via positive stance), Dan interacted with interlocutors of mutually shared identity memberships with whom he aligned (or disaligned) for various purposes. The six interlocutors discussed below were chosen with these particular dynamics in mind.

The interlocutors for this study were recruited in a number of ways, including the friend-of-a-friend method (cf. Milroy 1980), impromptu face to face solicitations, tapping into my own social network, and seeking the assistance of identity-based campus organizations such as the LGBTQ+ and African-American student associations. For the latter, I posted information about the study in the associations' public forums to solicit interest from students who identified as members. This method proved to be particularly effective given the role of social media in spreading information and the efficacy of the medium with consideration of age-related technology use in mind.

Jabari

The first interlocutor was Jabari, a Gay Black Male (GBM[6]) who was originally from Brooklyn, New York but had lived in Atlanta for the previous few years. At the time of the study, Jabari was twenty-eight years old, held a B.A. Degree in Criminal Justice and was working in law enforcement. As with Dan, Jabari was recruited via my own social network, using the friend-of-a-friend method (Milroy 1980). We all shared a mutual acquaintance who was embedded within the local Atlanta culture. It should be noted, however, that Dan and Jabari belonged to two different (non-overlapping) social networks, with Dan being a university acquaintance and Jabari being a personal friend of the mutual liaison. Jabari's strong personality and his rootedness in identity, particularly in terms of race and sexuality, was a strong motivating factor in his selection as a participant. His outspoken nature also made him a viable candidate as I knew that he would provide stimulating conversation with Dan. This same asset did, however, have the potential of overshadowing Dan as the central speaker as Dan was more reserved, a concern to which I return in the chapters to follow.

Marc

The second interlocutor, Marc, self-identified as a Bisexual White Male (BiWM). At the time of study he was a twenty-eight-year-old graduate student in Art History attending the same University as Dan. Marc was originally from Florida. I met him in the campus coffee shop by striking up a conversation about my project. Marc and Dan shared

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[6] In order to connect each interlocutor with the identity memberships under consideration, abbreviations composed of sexuality, race, and gender will be used.

in common membership within in the LGBTQ+ community, though Dan self-identified as Gay and Marc as Bisexual. Though participants were not explicitly asked to disclose their sexual orientations during the interactions with Dan, they were asked to discuss their experiences and identities (gender, racial, and sexual). So Marc's disclosure of his sexuality during the interview is likely to have influenced Dan's orientation towards him, apropos audience design. Along with Marc, two other speakers identified as members of the LGBTQ+ community, creating ample opportunities for intra-community interaction with Dan.

Kelsey

The third interlocutor was Kelsey, a 22-year-old African-American female who self-identified as "Bicurious" (BiBF), an identity that she described through narratives about exploring her own sexuality in college and the stringent prescriptions that the Black community placed on sexual identity. Kelsey and I met through the University's Black student organization after they posted a video of me on their social media page, soliciting interested participants. This method of recruitment was a surprise to me, as I went seeking face-to-face interactions. I was, however, strongly encouraged by the organization's facilitators to use this approach as an effective means of getting the word out quickly. Though they did not know me in any way, it was clear that my membership within the Black community was valued and contributed to a seemingly genuine desire to help as the entire student organization was extremely gracious. At the time of her interview, Kelsey was completing her final year of her B.A. at the University. After seeing the online video, she contacted me via email and after several rounds of correspondence, we

coordinated an introductory session with Dan. She was a generally outgoing personality who connected with Dan almost instantly.

Mary Jane

Mary Jane was a 24-year-old White female who self-identified as Bisexual (BiWF). At the time of the study, she held an M.A. and was working as a staff member at the University. Mary Jane was recruited via a social connection to the University where she was employed. While having a casual conversation with her about my project, she inquired if I had filled all of the female participant slots and volunteered to be a participant. Because of her position at the University, she exhibited a breadth of knowledge about identity. She was particularly attuned to issues of identity development given her educational background and occupation as well as self-identifying as Bisexual, which made her a valued participant.

Cody

Cody, a Straight Black Male (SBM), Mary Jane's co-worker, was one of the older participants. He was 27 at the time of the study. He held an M.A. in higher education and also worked in the field of student affairs. In addition, as a Black Male from Mississippi, who attended a PWI, he shared with Dan an understanding of what it meant to navigate his Black and Male identities in a predominantly White setting. We met via the acquaintance I shared with Mary Jane. And, like Mary Jane, Cody brought a wealth of knowledge to the study as an employee of the University.

Barry O.

The final interaction that Dan had was with Barry O., a self-identified Straight White Male (SWM) who was 22 at the time of the interview. He was completing his Graduate education and preparing to enter the military upon completion. Barry was also connected to Mary Jane and Cody via a friend-of-a-friend but was not as closely linked to the office of Student Affairs. In addition to his studies, Barry's extra-curricular activities drew heavily on a heteronormative hegemonic presentation of gender identity as a member of the military and an avid martial artist.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Recognized by many as the unofficial "Gay Black Mecca," Atlanta, Georgia is an ideal location for observing the intersections of language with racial, gendered, and sexualized identities. Atlanta's history and culture are heavily influenced by African-Americans in a myriad of ways, both as a Southern Metropolis (the South being critical to African-American identity given its prominence as the primary point of entry for many of the enslaved Africans who were brought to the U.S.), as well as a central cite of the Civil Rights Movement. The cultural significance of Atlanta paired with its significant percentage of LGBTQ+ identifying citizens within the city-- 4.2% according to a Gallup Survey (Leonhardt and Miller 2015), (The Advocate 2005; Bartone 2015) -- have contributed to its designation as a "Gay Black Mecca" and thus a prime location for exploring the research goals identified for this study.

Once all of the participants had been identified, I scheduled meeting times for each interview. Before each interview, I briefed the participants, made formal introduc-

tions with Dan, and walked them through the entire process. All participants (including Dan) were informed that this was a research project investigating the role of language in identity construction and ideologies and would revolve around the collection of conversations about different identity-based topics (notably gender, sexuality, and race). Interviews occurred in the order listed in Table 3.1. The interviews consisted of one-on-one open-ended conversations guided by prepared questions concerning gender, ethnicity and sexuality. The interviews were recorded in my absence, transcribed, and analyzed later. The participants understood that I would not be present for the conversation and that the study was voluntary, anonymous, and that I would pay them $50.00 per completed interview.

Conversations between the participants lasted approximately one hour on average and were followed by a brief 20-30 minute demographic interview with me (Appendix A). The purpose of these final interviews was twofold: to elicit pertinent demographic information (age, race, socioeconomic background, etc) and to gather further data about linguistic and cultural ideologies. Further, it was during these debriefings that I informed the participants of the full scope of the study and answered any questions that they had concerning the process.

While interlocutors' self-identified with regard to the memberships that they held in various identity-based communities, it should be noted that, like Dan, each interlocutor held a uniquely complex and nuanced set of identities that did not go unnoticed and which often transcended the limitations of the labels that were provided on the demographic sheet, in which case, they were encouraged to create labels for themselves. I sup-

plied ample space on the demographic sheet in order to allow for this complexity to be described. This approach both challenged and reified my treatment of identity as nuanced and transcendent, particularly in terms of sexuality as the study involved a total of three interlocutors who identified as Bisexual/Bi-curious and did not subscribe to heteronormative ideals of sexuality, thus finding shared membership in the LGBTQ+ community along with Dan.

While Dan's use of intraspeaker variation to adapt to his interlocutors was a central research focus, I also considered the effect of topic. This interest informed the types of questions that I selected and how they were organized. The conversations did not all follow the same thematic progression from race to gender to sexuality, as Dan's level of comfort with the protocol granted him a bit of space to improvise and go at his own pace and order. Conversations were, however still guided by questions addressing these identity categories as both constructed and essentialized. The participants' personal views and experiences with said notions of identity demonstrated an association of cultural benefits and disadvantages with which these identities were associated. As topic influences the setting of an interaction, it was hypothesized that in so doing it would also inform how speakers interact with one another. The IRB approved interview questions were guided by a set of pre-determined topics designed to be conducive to a conversational interaction between the interlocutors in a private meeting room on campus. The guided topic shifts were intended to speak to the question of how topic contributes to shifts in style (Blom and Gumperz 1972; Labov 2001) in addition to interlocutor shifts as audience design.

Given that narrative is crucial to the enactment of identity, (Labov & Waletzky 1967; Gumperz 1977; Coates 2000; Ochs and Caps 2001; Bucholtz and Hall 2004; Beeman 2010), the interview questions (see Appendix B) were also designed to provide a space for personal narratives, allowing natural speech (as opposed to that which may be considered heavily self-monitored) to surface over time. This methodology was designed to evoke the identity construction processes (particularly that of performance), triggered by narrative recounting by Dan as well as his interlocutors. This approach may prove to be greatly beneficial to our understanding of how language is used in the construction of identity, individually as well as in interaction.

Though the interview questions were designed to elicit discussion centered around the identity of the other participants, the project's data were based on Dan's dis/alignment with the participants when his own identity or position was discussed/challenged. The subject was tasked with presenting narratives about his life experiences concerning gender, race, and sexuality, in addition to the questionnaire. His own narratives were designed to serve as rapport builders as well as guide the interactions between him and the interlocutors, creating a script for him to follow. This methodology was designed to evoke the identity construction process of narratives from the other interlocutors as well as Dan. The questionnaire was given to Dan but both participants were allowed to briefly peruse it before commencing the interaction. Dan was instructed to facilitate a natural conversation with the interlocutors about the topics, attempting to answer each question provided. If a few questions were not explicitly asked, it was rare that they did not naturally surface over the course of the conversations.

Though my focus is not concerned with how intraspeaker variation is realized along a formality continuum, I did draw from Labov's (1972) work, prioritizing natural and vernacular speech. To that end, the interviews were recorded in my absence so as to minimize impact from the Observer's Paradox[7]. To reduce the potential for shifts away from natural speech or the influence of the Observer's Paradox, the participants were initially not informed that their language was being studied, only that the content of the discussions about identity were the focus. Dan (the central speaker) was informed that he would be assisting me in recording these discussions by facilitating the conversations with other interlocutors in my absence. Despite his role, it was also emphasized that the discussions, though guided were to be natural conversations between two speakers. Due to the potential impact that the Observer's Paradox could have on his presentation of natural speech, Dan was not informed that he was the central focus of this project until the completion of the project. With this in mind, he too went through the same consent and disclosure process (see Appendix C) of other participants, granting formal permission for audio recording.

3.3 TRANSCRIPTION/CODING CONVENTIONS

In order to obtain reliable and clear audio of each interview, I used a TASCAM DR-22WL linear portable digital recording device, which featured two embedded condenser microphones, minimizing the necessity of external microphones and lavaliers. Before each interview, I personally placed the device directly between the two participants on a

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[7] The risk of a participant altering his/her linguistic performance due to presence of the researcher and the awareness that they are being observed is known as the Observer's Paradox (Labov 1972).

conference table in hopes of avoiding a lopsided audio recording. Once I verified that the device was operating effectively, I left the participants alone and moved downstairs to an office. Upon completion of the interview, Dan was instructed to notify me via text, at which time I returned to wrap up the sessions.

In order to protect the privacy and anonymity of my participants, the collected data were transcribed solely by me using the transcription software ExpressScribe Transcription Software (version 5.88). All Transcripts were divided into discursive lines, coded, and numbered in the same manner marked with the same transcription conventions listed below (Table 3.2). Following the transcription conventions from Bucholtz (2000) listed in Figure 3.2, I transcribed the conversations, focusing on both the accuracy of discursive content and coding for linguistic features associated with power and identity, in addition to pauses and discursive turns.

Coding methods were designed to be both pragmatic and semantic, capturing the meaning making processes of discourse as well as what speakers actually do with language. Thus, I code for a number of elements based on the focus of each analysis chapter: power negotiation, identity group maintenance, and performativity, respectively. For example, in Chapter 4, the primary focus of my analysis is power-based linguistic features as indexical of negotiations of power-based identity, so I coded for specific linguistic features that have been associated with identity (e.g., suck teeth, reading, shade), power (e.g., interruptions, overlapping speech), and powerlessness (e.g., final rising intonation, self-interruptions, quiet phonation). The features pertinent to my exploration of power-based identity are marked symbolically but are not necessarily interpreted singularly. For

example, interruptions could be indexical of both powerful speech and solidarity. As one of my goals is to demonstrate the transcendence of language across varieties and the limitations of labels (and label-based definitions), an overlap in speech could easily be a means of agreeing with a speaker from the "Amen corner" just as much as it could be considered an interruption. For this reason, I did not limit my coding strictly to features, but instead included an additional focus on discourse and considerations of context, culture, and effect.

As I broadened my scope in Chapter 5 to linguistic varieties as drawn from identity membership and used as means of aligning with fellow members, I shifted my focus towards intraspeaker variation as code-switching in terms of linguistic varieties. Though linguistic features were not the central focus in Chapter 5, they were still helpful as one of many guide-posts to help identify the linguistic varieties at play. However, given the challenges of linguistic overlap resulting in some features having multiple associations, these features were not the sole point of reference, making space for a discussion of the limitations of linguistic labels and boundaries.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I moved beyond strict linguistic features or what Saussure refers to as *parole* and moved my focus towards a broader view of language as discourse or *langue*. By way of illustration, a sample transcription is provided in Figure 3.1, following by a list of transcription conventions in Table 3.2.

3.4 ANALYTICAL METHODS

As there was a need for an analytical tool which would take into consideration power, community, and performance relative to identity as well as language in action,

natural speech and language beyond any single specific feature, the collected data was analyzed through a Discourse Analysis (DA) lens. Despite my division of the data into turns and discursive lines, the entire interaction is still a conversation and, given DA's treatment of discourse beyond features as conversational and typically naturally occurring speech, it is a preferred lens for a holistic conversation analysis. In addition, DA does not focus solely on the linguistic features but looks beyond the text to the social contexts which inform and are embedded in discourse such as power dynamics. Drawing on Barbara Johnstone's (2008) discussion of power and solidarity in terms of (a)symmetry, in Chapter 4, I analyze power norms as they are embedded in linguistic features and the social categories with which they are associated (i.e. gender, sexuality, and race).

DA also focuses heavily on the relation between power and discourse, investigating how power is created and reproduced through language. This makes it an ideal method of analysis when determining the role of power in the use of intraspeaker variation, thus addressing one of the overall goals of this study. As this type of analysis focuses heavily on the relationship between power and discourse, investigating how power is created and reproduced through language will make it an ideal method of analysis for determining the role of power in the use of intraspeaker variation. This allows me to observe stance and alignment as a means of negotiating out-group conflicts and indexing in-group allegiances.

As Chapter 5 considers the relationship between identities (and their corresponding language varieties) within a linguistic individual and given the social significance of the use of AAL in moments of conflict alongside the use of MAE, it will be interesting to ob-

serve how elements from these varieties coexist within a single repertoire and how they function in the enactment of the unique identities of Gay Black men. By employing the analytical framework of Foucauldian discourse analysis, a type of discourse analysis which highlights power relations, I intend to investigate and map out the cultural and linguistic power norms as they are established via AAL, MAE and GMS in relation to one another. By drawing on the discussions of Van Dijk (2008) and Fairclough (1995a) concerning language, ethnicity, and power within the United States and abroad, I hope to expand this analytical lens into one through which I situate the sociolinguistic elements evaluated in linguistic repertoires consisting of mainstream and non-mainstream varieties alike. For this project, I draw on the definition of discourse as speech beyond text or parole which is where I place my focus for Chapter 6, making Discourse Analysis invaluable. Given DA's focus on naturally occurring speech, the lens allows for a holistic conversation analysis that looks beyond the text to the social contexts that inform and are embedded in discourse, including power dynamics. As DA examines speech as a type of action and in turn examines acts as enacted via speech, so in addition to this form of analysis, I incorporate speech act theory (Austin 1962; Grice 1989) when examining the performative nature of speech and identity. Though I am not employing Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 1995a, Van Dijk 2008), I do draw on some of its associated themes such as power, and constructed identity and style.

Table 3.1 Participant demographic chart

Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Sex. ID	Age	Ed.*	Occupation	Session	Session Date
Interviewer								
Dan	M	Af-Am	Gay	19	H.S.	Student	All	All
Interlocutors								
Jabari	M	Af-Am	Gay	28	M.A.	Law Enforce.	1	10/4/16
Marc	M	White	Bisexual	30	M.A.	Student (Doctoral)	2	10/7/16
Kelsey	F	Af-Am	Bicurious	22	H.S.	Student (Undergraduate)	3	2/9/17
Mary Jane	F	White	Bisexual	24	M.A.	Higher Education	4	2/10/17
Cody	M	Af-Am	Straight	27	M.A.	Higher Education	5	2/10/17
Barry O.	M	White	Straight	22	B.A	Student (Graduate)	6	2/11/17

Table 3.2 Transcription Conventions

?	end of intonation unit, rising intonation
:	length
~	rapid speech, speech is slurred together
-	self-interruption, break in the word, choppy speech

º	Quiet phonation
bold	emphasized speech
(.)	Unmeasure pause, 0.5 seconds or less
@	laughter
h	out-breath
[ ]	overlapping speech
(())	transcriber comment

Exchange #1	0 min **		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1	Dan	alright so h: I'm Dan you know and what's your name	
2	Jabari	I'm Jabari	
3	Dan	Jabari? How do you spell that?	
4	Jabari	J-A-B-A-R-I	
5	Dan	ok nice to meet you	
6		so tell me a little bit about yourself like	
7		are you from Atlanta	
8		aha- what's up with you.	
9	Jabari	No I'm not from Atlanta-	
10		-Oh so **you're** doing the questions	Self-interruption
11	Dan	mhm	
12	Jabari	oh ok praise god	
13		@@	

Figure 3.1 Sample Transcription

CHAPTER 4

"IT'S NOT ABOUT ME!": NEGOTIATING THE POWER DYNAMICS OF A MULTIPLEX IDENTITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Power and prestige have been associated with identity groups for as long as there have been cultures rooted in inequality and social capital. Identity groups, like personal identities, do not exist in vacuums. They are grossly informed by social capital and power structures historically set in place (Bourdieu 1986, 1991). Gender, sexuality, and race are all informed by the larger power systems within which they exist and serve to either reproduce or challenge said systems. Groups that embody power (Bourdieu 1986) mark themselves as the standard to which all else must subscribe: the hegemony. For example, the essentialized notion of race is one that was constructed and framed by otherness, particularly in American culture, a deviation from Whiteness.

Power has played a crucial role in the creation of essentialized identities and their labels, but identities are not single faceted. Dan is not just a Male, just as he is not solely Black or Gay. He is all of these and holds multiple identity memberships which influence and interact with one another instead of existing in singular vacuums. Thus, in order to understand the nature of a multiplex identity, we have to begin to observe identity in its

interactive state (as being composed of multiple resources which coexist and potentially influence one another).

Power is embodied in our identities, embedded in our speech and inherent to our interactions. If the positioning of people is how our essentialized identities are constructed, it would make sense that relational self-positioning be critical to processes of identity negotiation and construction. As power norms are established and assigned via relational imbalance, and since power is highly influential to identity, it would stand to reason that the nature of constructed identity is in a similar way relational.

While power has typically been addressed as influence (French and Raven 1959), due to the role of relativity in socially constructed identity, I will be treating it as rooted in positioning as a potential means of attaining influence or control. I refer to this positioning as the negotiation of the power norms with which different identities are associated. The purpose of said negotiating is to ultimately establish "who is who" during an interaction so that speakers are equipped to move around one another based on a mutually established set of expectations. These negotiations can take place through a number of approaches, particularly stance-taking (Dubois 2007), footing (Goffman 1981), and the interactive positioning of the self and others. Said interactions are largely informed by the concepts of face negotiation, relational identity (Hill 1995; Kiesling 2002, 2005; Silverstein 2003), and the theory of Identity Negotiation (Ting-Toomey 2015). In this chapter, I focus on the ways in which power dynamics surface during interactions, how a single speaker (Dan) manages to self-position around them, and ultimately how he challenges and reproduces them.

Power based speech can function as a reflection of one's social positioning, often mirroring the power norms associated with a speaker's identity categories. Early language and gender research treated gender-based language as linked to power differentials. For example, "powerful" speech, or that which was associated with hegemonic masculinity (O'Barr & Atkins 1980; DeFrancisco 1991) rejected politeness prescriptions leading to a type of covert prestige, that which is not typically seen as prestigious (Trudgill 1972). In turn, "powerless" speech, formerly treated as that associated with Women's Language (WL) was seen as subscribing to typical notions of politeness, reflecting a lower social status (Trudgill 1972) and subsequent reach for more overt prestige. Conversational features such as silence and refusal to take up conversational topics (DeFrancisco 1991) placed the burden of conversation on one's interlocutor, positioning them as "powerless" in relation. Like topic control, other features such as conversation dominance (O'Barr & Atkins 1980; West 1984; Holmes 1995; Kiesling 2002), direct speech, and interruptions (West 1984) were said to index a position of power within conversation, often initiated by the more "powerful" speaker. Contrastively, features marked as "powerless" such as hedges, final rising intonation, self-corrections, hesitant speech, and self-interruptions (Lakoff 1975) were said to be suggestive of a speaker who is negotiating power norms from a lower status. The above research was challenged and complicated by the introduction of factors such as race, sexuality, and social class, facilitating a more nuanced treatment of language, gender, and power. Despite these challenges, the uptake of these associations in the general populace are not to go unnoticed and their contributions cannot be understated when it comes to their associations with constructed identities. Though power

based linguistic elements are critical in the detection of power negotiations, they are not always sufficient as indicators of positioning. For example, a single feature, such as overlapping speech, can serve at least two functions: to overtake one's interlocutor or to express solidarity through interactive call and response. This chapter seeks to contextualize power-based features in a number of environments (both linguistic and interactional) in order to examine the multiple ways in which features are used to negotiate power and to develop a more comprehensive view of said linguistic elements. Section 4.2 will introduce and delineate the multiple personae that Dan employs for negotiation. I will provide a thorough walk through each of the power based personae before I address Dan's negotiation of the power norms with which his identities are associated. The following section (4.3), I will demonstrate the ways in which the personae intersect with Dan's multiplex identity and focus on Dan's use of said personae during negotiation.

4.2 POWER BASED PERSONAE

To examine the process of negotiation, there must be an understanding of how power-based interactions take place. As mentioned above, when addressing power as positioning, one must take stance into consideration (Tannen 1990). Goffman (1981) established the framework of footing and evaluation of a subject's alignment in narrative tellings and how said alignment (or stance) becomes a frame for the events that are recounted. He argued that a speaker's stance towards varying events within narratives creates a framework through which he organizes, evaluates, and relationally places himself, constructing his identities contextually. Stance is critical to the negotiation of identity as one evaluates and positions the self and others as a means of constructing what Michael

Silverstein (2003) refers to as a relational identity (Hill 1995; Kiesling 2002, 2005). Stance relies heavily on relationality and differentiation, the latter of which is considered in Judith Irvine's (2001) work exploring the use of style as intra-speaker variation. John W. DuBois (2007) discusses stance as an event of the evaluation of objects and signaling of relations during interactions and conversations. The stance that is taken by a speaker indexes the spatial/relational positioning of social actors and is rooted in the evaluation of an object or other interlocutors leading to a horizontal positioning (proximity) of one's self. In addition to stance, I will also consider the presence of what I have termed "verticality" (Lefebvre 1991), the vertical positioning of speakers based on power norms acting as a directional counterpart to stance. If speakers are not on an equal plane or footing, unequal verticality is implied (as one is above the other in theoretical height). I will evaluate stance in terms of positive, negative, or neutral (symbolized as +, -, ∅), as a horizontal alignment in proximity of speakers during moments of talk. Contrastively, I will examine verticality in terms of equality or the lack thereof (symbolized as = and =/= respectively).

Combined, these two (stance and verticality) lead to power as positional and result in either Imbalance, Conflict or Solidarity. In addition to stance and verticality, it is also important to focus on what linguistic features are doing during moments of talk and how these actions yield power-based personae. Power-based linguistic features seem to point to two major elements which help create positioning: conversational initiation and conversational burden. As mentioned above (DeFrancisco 1991), the uptake of a conversational topic can shift the burden of conversation and thus power norms of an interaction and should be taken into consideration. Combined, the elements of stance, verticality,

conversational initiation, and conversational burden, yield a total of six potential personae from which Dan draws during his negotiations: *Interviewer, Interviewee, Challenger, Defender, Authority*, and *Comrade*. I use the terms Imbalance and Conflict to represent two types of power-based positioning, the first being defined as presenting a positive stance alignment, but a lack of equality between speakers. There are cases during which speakers may agree with one another, but there is still a hierarchical placement indicating that some power dynamic is present. On the other hand, there may be equal verticality between speakers but a negative relational stance which has the potential to lead to conflict, for example, a disagreement between speakers on equal footing. Based in this framework, the only way for solidarity between speakers to occur is by the removal of power altogether yielding equal footing combined with positive stance leading to equal alignments both horizontally and vertically (Table 4.1).

Interviewer

I analyze these six personae during Dan's conversational interactions, all of which are motivated by or connected to power. I hypothesize that Dan is orienting (via stance) towards and posturing himself (via verticality) both around his interlocutors as well as outside power dynamics that these speakers bring into the conversation via their own identities. Dan initially presents himself as the *Interviewer,* a position of legitimate power (French and Raven 1959) granted by me as the lead researcher. What is interesting is that there are moments during which he fully embraces this persona (taking control over the conversations and limiting his responses) and others when he rejects it, opting for a more congenial (arguably almost submissive) interaction. There are thus moments when the

conversation dynamics are flipped and Dan becomes the *Interviewee*. A neutralized stance is what facilitates the Interviewer/Interviewee interactions. Though the conversation dynamics remain the same, once negative stance is presented, the possibility of Conflict is introduced. This change in stance can make way for more direct power dynamics to be brought into discussions such as face-threatening acts (FTAs) (Brown and Levinson 1987). Dan takes on both *Defender* and *Challenger* roles as he has to navigate power based elements and initiates a few of his own. As stance moves towards positive alignment (+), Dan is framed as an *Authority* by speakers who adopt a lower vertical positioning particularly regarding topics related to identity categories (often out-group members-those who do not share identity group memberships) of which Dan is considered more well-versed, drawing on a type of expert power (French and Raven 1959). Finally, Dan exhibits the persona of *Comrade,* specifically with interlocutors with whom he shares common identity memberships (and hardships), drawing on a referential type of influence.

After initially identifying Dan (GBM[8]-Gay Black Male) as my central figure, I briefed him on the discussion protocol and recorded a bit of our one-on-one discussion both for the sake of posterity and in case any interesting elements surfaced (particularly significant code-switching when discussing his identity). The interaction between us was a moment during which, as he accepted his role and the terms with which it was associated, a sense of legitimate power was transferred from me (the lead investigator) to Dan, as

[8] To facilitate analysis, all interlocutors were assigned acronyms describing their sexual identity, racial, and gender categories respectively

the *Interviewer: the speaker who issues questions in anticipation of a response.* It should be noted that the fact that this was an academic study brought on a sense of institutional legitimation which was reinforced by conducting the conversations in an institutional building (on site at the University). This type of power was transferred by association to all things involved with the study, from paperwork to the positioning of speakers. So it is no surprise that it would make its way to Dan himself. If these were not sufficient factors to establish him as a source of power, my absence from the interviews, specifically, my establishment of the study and subsequent departure from the room, leaving Dan in my stead, further solidified this perceived positioning. With this, despite my expressed desire to all speakers that each interaction be equilateral, purposely or not, Dan was marked as the *Interviewer*, holding implicitly sanctioned legitimate power. This imbalance, along with Dan's performance, contributed to a recurring pattern of one-sided interactions for which Dan was called out by his fellow speakers, despite all participants being given the same instructions. In the following Transcripts I explore the ways in which this persona of *Interviewer* manifested itself and evolved with various interlocutors throughout their discussions. The *Interviewer* was unsurprisingly the initiator of the majority of ex-changes, provoking answers from speakers and placing the burden of conversation on them. This persona yielded no personal stance (∅), given the pre-constructed questions, but a vertical imbalance due to the power position linked to being an *Interviewer* with conversational control.

Transcript 4.1 "Oh so you're doing the questions?" (Jabari- GBM)

Exchange #1	**0 min.****		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1	Dan	alright so hi I'm Dan you know and what's your name	
2	Jabari	I'm Jabari	
3	Dan	Jabari? How do you spell that?	
4	Jabari	J-A-B-A-R-I	
5	Dan	ok nice to meet you	
6		so tell me a little bit about yourself like	
7		are you from Atlanta	
8		wha- what's up with you.	
9	Jabari	No I'm not from Atlanta-	
10		-Oh so **you're** doing the questions	Self-interruption
11	Dan	mhm	
12	Jabari	oh ok praise god	
13		@@	

At the beginning of the very first interview, there was a bit of tension between Dan and Jabari as both were told about the project beforehand and knew that the process would be facilitated by a Gay Black Male but were unsure of their roles until the day of the interview. The misunderstanding was due largely to an inability to brief Jabari before-hand as a result of his late arrival. Dan met with me a few hours beforehand and was informed of his expectations. The initial intent for was for me to meet with Dan and Jabari

individually, then decide which would become the focus of this project and subsequently, the facilitator. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I prepared Dan to facilitate the exchange as my sole option. Jabari learned of his role in the above interaction, as he arrived just before the exchange leaving little time to debrief. The resulting tension would go on to inform the conversation between the two and the initial power negotiations that would guide their positioning. This was resolved when Jabari directly asked about Dan's role, but there would be more negotiations to come as Jabari took to heart the expectation of an equilateral conversation and frequently contested Dan's *Interviewer* persona.

Interviewee

Transcript 4.2 "I have no power here." (Marc- BiWM)

Both the *Interviewer* and *Interviewee* personae lacked stance (∅) due to the neutrality with which the questions were designed for the study. Though there was little space for stance, there remained vertical differentiations for both personae as they were not rooted in equality with the *Interviewer* being on the higher end of the power spectrum and the *Interviewee* on the lower. Unlike the *Interviewer* persona, the *Interviewee* was on the receiving end of the questions, bearing the aforementioned burden of the conversation. This persona was the manifestation of a complete subversion of positioning by the interlocutor. As *Interviewee*, Dan lacked personal stance (treated as neutral) due to the pre-constructed questions. However, the term did imply vertical powerlessness via positioning. In this Transcript, Dan was framed as the *Interviewer* via an unspoken understanding. The two openly discussed my establishment of Dan as the facilitator and Marc admitted that he understood that to mean that Dan was to be the initiator in the conversa-

tions. Despite this confusion, however, Dan stated that he "had no power" (line 1457) and was just as much involved as Marc.

Exchange #2	**@46 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1452	Marc	also that came from like	
1453		Brianna said you	
1454		were kinda the facilitator	
1455		so I was like okay good* cause	
1456		I didn't really know like what-	
1457	Dan	I have no power here	Interruption
1458		it's fine	
1459		I just have the questions	
1460		like you can have the questions	
1461	Marc	@	
1462		@@@@	
1463		yeah uh I dunno	
1464		like how hard was it for you	

In this Transcript, Dan and Marc (BiWM) were discussing racial stereotypes and as Marc exhibited a bit of trepidation in responding to the topic, Dan attempted to comfort him but does so with an interruption (Line 1457). He seemingly addresses an unspoken yet perceived lack of bi-laterality in the conversation and relinquishes his power, making it clear that, though he is the *Interviewer*, he has no power. He diminishes the potential of an assumed legitimized role by reducing it to "just having the questions" and making himself a simple possessor and not *Interviewer*. Contrary to the previous interac-

tion with Jabari, Dan made a concerted effort to mitigate if not neutralize the assumed imbalance that exists between an interviewer and interviewee by stripping himself of power in word. Said persona is characterized by a lack of verbal participation, asking questions and placing the burden of conversation on the interviewees almost exclusively. This frames a seemingly egalitarian relationship and interaction which was not initially present with Jabari. However, repeated instances occur throughout this and other subsequent interviews where Dan clearly took on and exhibited the persona of *Interviewer*, largely through minimal responses (in terms of length) during overtly established open conversations. Try as he might, he still maintained the position of imbalance via minimal responses, initiating the questions, and the very pronouncement that he has no power, drawing on a sense of authority he opts to yield.

I still had to consider how the conflation of "conversational facilitator" (the intended role) with power came about (presumably from my transfer of power to him mentioned in section 4.2), whether or not it surfaces in the same manner for every interaction, and how it is handled in each circumstance. Instead of maintaining Dan's role as leader of the discussion, speakers overtly asked him to respond to the same questions he poses, placing the onus of conversation back on him. This was an efficient means of exerting and negotiating power by changing positioning and contesting a unilateral discussion. The shifting of the burden of conversation can be considered both a hard power (Nye 1990; Wilson 2008) tactic (i.e., that which is more direct) as well as a soft tactic if properly mitigated via persuasion (i.e., that which is indirect and often based on relationship. In

the following Transcripts, speakers attempt this shift of positioning in a number of ways which Dan uniquely navigates seemingly with identity in mind.

Transcript 4.3 “I had to flip it on you somehow.” (Barry O.- SWM)

In this Transcript, we observe Dan's negotiation of power as his position is shifted from Interviewer to Interviewee, being left with the burden of conversation by Barry O (SWM). Here, the verticality is subverted by Barry O., who arguably usurps power within the conversation, placing Dan in the less powerful position. As he shifts the weight of conversation over to Dan, who acknowledges the flip, Barry O. admits to the power move with “I had to flip it on you somehow" indicating an awareness of the power dynamics at play and the need for more equal footing.

Exchange #6	**@15 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
589	Barry O.	But uh yeah I definitely—
590		But so tell me about ((school name))
591		The experience of being here
592		Because like
593		I know that you know
594		Being African-American on this campus
595	Dan	Mhm
596	Barry O.	A really challenging space to occupy
597	Dan	Oh yeah
598	Barry O.	Uh (.) you know I think that
599		We’ve made some progress in the last couple years

Exchange #6	**@15 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
600		Not- but we're not done
601	Dan	Mhm
602	Barry O.	But uh definitely before 2014
603		This place uh was a difficult place to be
604		And it created
605		A ((unintelligible)) insular community
606		Like around the EBSU or EBA house
607		Um that kinda prohibited
608		Uh inclusion
609		So like whats wha- especially as a first year student
610	Dan	Yeah
611	Barry O.	Now you're s- you're like sitting on the vanguard of it
612		What's that like
613	Dan	Asking the tough questions
614		I dunno it's um
615	Barry O.	You know I had to flip it on you somehow
616	Dan	I guess so
617		So like the BSA and the EBSU I guess they're really not as popular as they were in the past
618	Barry O.	Yeah

In the above clip, Dan is positioned as the *Interviewee* by his interlocutor Barry O. (SWM). As he is talking about his own views and experiences, Barry O. interrupts himself and makes a direct request that Dan share his experiences. Whether it was made clear

or not, Barry O. is attempting to convert a one-sided interaction into a conversation. Interestingly enough, he continues to talk and elaborate after his request giving Dan little room to speak with the exception of minimal responses. Barry's thorough background of the racial history of the University is enlightening and lays a solid framework for the discussion but took up space that could have allowed Dan to share. Once the floor is relinquished, Dan does not give any implication that he does not wish to answer or that he is on the defensive. He does remark that Barry O. is "asking' the tough questions" to which Barry O. jokingly replies adding a bit of levity to the conversation and potentially minimizing the call-out[9]. This implies a knowledge of the potential power dynamics at play and an attempt to mitigate them. This approach does not necessarily mean that Barry O. isn't sincerely interested in Dan's narrative but it does imply that power plays a role in his interactions and that he is aware of the position he holds in the conversation. Dan responds to this direct use of power by simply responding, whereas he presents more push back in other interactions where the call-outs are more indirect and nuanced. The role of *Interviewer* taken on by Dan has yielded several imbalanced scenarios which were acknowledged by fellow speakers. Barry O. takes this opportunity to "flip it" by not only placing the burden of conversation on Dan, but in doing so, inverting the power dynamics at play by creating the exact same dynamic of imbalance instead of what might more closely resemble solidarity.

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[9] A call-out is a face-threatening act which draws attention to the negative attributes or behaviors of the addressee (Spears 2001).

Transcript 4.4 "That's why I asked." (Jabari- GBM)

Challenger

As conversations become more personal with speakers' comfort level, the potential for a negative stance arises as the neutrality subsides. Though the potential for conflict may increase based on personal interactions, so does that of solidarity. Similarly, as we focus on these later discussions, Dan begins to negotiate his own identity beyond power and personae. His personal identities (gender, sexuality, race) move to the fore as the focus of his negotiations which become more emotional and prone to conflict. Like the *Interviewer*, the *Challenger* persona initiates interactions which could potentially lead to conflict, due to a negative stance alignment with an equal verticality. In these cases, speakers do not share an agreement in terms of topic or situation yet, unlike the *Interviewee/Interviewee* dyad neither speaker trumps the other in terms of vertical positioning. Instead, there appears to be a push/pull type of interaction which exhibits bits of control for each during different moments in conversation.

Exchange #1	**@24 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
835	Dan	okay so do you think that like	
836		there are different standards for like gender	
837		for gender behavior in like Black communities	
838		versus White communities	
839	Jabari	that's a really good question	

Exchange #1	**@24 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
840	Dan	ºthat's why I askedº	Quiet phonation
841	Jabari	um ((teeth suck))	shade detected
842		unfortunately I can't answer that	
843	Dan	mhm	
844	Jabari	because I've never been White	Shade

In this clip with Jabari, Dan is kind of asking for trouble and demonstrates a bit of annoyance (or at the very least sass) when his question is met with the response "that's a good question!" Dan's response to Jabari's observation is flippant and, while it may not be considered full shade[10], it is definitely confrontational and provocative in nature. This was evidently detected by Jabari as his immediate reaction to Dan's comment was the use of suck teeth, an AAL, AAWL, and GMS associated feature which is often interpreted as a marker of distancing or disrespect (Rickford and Rickford 1976). Just as call-outs and shade arose from interlocutors, Dan was no stranger to introducing FTAs (Face Threatening Acts) himself. There are moments during which he, directly and indirectly, invokes

[10] Shade-throwing is an example of signifyin', a rhetorical device where the referential meaning of an utterance does not reflect the actual intended meaning and listeners are required to construct the meaning based on shared knowledge (see Mitchell-Kernan 1972; Smitherman 1977; Gates 1988, Morgan 1999). This use of indirection is similar to some forms of "camp" language used among White Gay men (Harvey 2000, 2002). In camp speech, one might quote a film or literary work to indirectly convey a meaning that required awareness of a particular " Gay " citation. In the case of shade-throwing, we see the convergence of African-American traditions of signifyin' and Gay traditions of camp. (Cornelius and Barrett 2019)

overt power to place himself at a vertically higher position by creating tension that the other speakers must navigate. Like the *Challenger* persona, the *Defender* also yields a negative stance between speakers which could lead to conflict. The difference is that the *Defender* is on the receiving end of a potential conflict to navigate which the *Challenger* has initiated.

Defender

In certain scenarios, the positioning of speakers was not only flipped, changing the potential covert power dynamics, but more direct power elements were introduced into the conversation. These elements often surfaced as FTAs and took the shape of call-outs and direct speech presented by interlocutors. Dan was tasked with the challenge of effectively managing these threats in a manner which neutralized them and helped him to regain his positioning.

Transcript 4.5 "I heard things about Mississippi…" (Cody- SBM)

When discussing demographics, Dan learns that Cody (SBM) is from Mississippi to which Dan replies "ooh!…I've never been there before" in a way that implied he was unimpressed. He continues the discussion of Cody's most recent relocations and follows up by indirectly insulting his home State, saying "Cause I've heard things about Mississippi." First of all, anytime an AAL speaker says that they've "heard something" it is almost always an indirect means of intimating or inquiring about a socially sensitive subject. This is definitely a secondary meaning, invoking the coded lexicon of AAL which is often perceived via tonal semantics or with the precursor "Well, you know…" That said,

in a previous discussion with Jabari, Dan's sentiments about Mississippi and its racial history were made evident with the question "What's in Mississipi, Chile?"

Exchange #5	**@15 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
654		Are you from like Atlanta	
655	Cody	No I'm from Mississippi	
656	Dan	Mississippi	
657		Oh m	Shade marker
658		º I've never been there before º	Quiet phonation/ whisper
659		@	
660	Cody	@@@	
661	Dan	Ah you moved	
662		you moved to Atlanta	
663	Cody	Uh I	
664		when I graduated undergrad	
665		I went to Miami	
666	Dan	okay	
667	Cody	((unintelligible)	
668		did my grad work there	
669		then I	
670		I just moved here in August	
671	Dan	Oh Okay	
672		Umkay	
673		Cause I he-	
674		I heard things bout Mississippi	Prepare for shade

Exchange #5	**@15 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
675		Jus-	Vocal fry, Self-Interruption
676	Cody	I mean with-freaking history =books	
677	Dan	M	Shade marker
678	Cody	people gettin' =lynched and	
679		=((teeth-suck))	Overlapping
680		slavery and—	
681	Dan	—I know	Interruption
682	Cody	some people still think we doin' s-	Self-interruption
683		they uh	Hedge
684		Black people are still in slavery in Mississippi—	
685	Dan	—I mean are they wrong?	Interruption
686	Cody	Uh: yes?	Final rising intonation
687	Dan	Unh: I feel like	Hedge
688		Slavery can be like	
689		It can be	
690		like in different shifts	Vocal fry
691		or like how people express certain ways of like	
692		The White over Black domination	
693		I feel like	
694		You can shift that	Defense
695	Cody	But that's everywhere though	

Exchange #5	**@15 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
696		It's just on a different level	
697	Dan	Yeah	
698		like a—	
699	Cody	—Mississippi is just—	Interruption
700	Dan	—like a this ø like a high level	Interruption
701	Cody	@	
702	Dan	=I feel like In Mississippi	
703	Cody	=@@@	
704	Dan	Cause my friend is from Mississippi	
705		And she's like "oh I don't"	
706		Like she's from like Jackson?	Final Rising intonation
707		But like she said other parts of Mississippi	
708		She like "Oh I don't I don't go there"	Mock Southern twang
709		Like "I I can't go there"	
710	Cody	Jackson is worse	
711	Dan	Really	
712	Cody	Yes	
713	Dan	Oh	
714	Cody	Well it's it's—	

It is clear that Dan is trying to say something without actually saying it, using an indirect (almost inverse) power move to do so by leading Cody into the "heard" content without explicitly trolling him (i.e., goading him into a visceral reaction through provoca-

tion). Cody then attempts to navigate the stereotypes he has no doubt encountered before by claiming history books make Mississippi seem like it's still in the past to which Dan replies, "Are they wrong?" (Line 685) This is shade at its finest. To not only indirectly agree with the people who critique Cody's hometown but then pose it as a question for him to defend is an incredibly clever way of insulting him with an air of nuance that flips power dynamics on their heads. Cody then replies "Uh… yes" with a final rising intonation, but not necessarily to index a lack of assurance in his statement. This affirmation is more of a "Duh! How could it not be?" And by framing it as a question (presented as though it is obvious) Cody flips the power dynamic back onto Dan as if to say "whatever you are trying to say… just come out and say it." Dan began this interaction with the upper-hand but Cody is also employing indirect power moves by making Dan take accountability for his unspoken implications. Dan is now on the defense and uncomfortable about being on the spot. He attempts to explain what he means via the idea of mental slavery to which Cody makes the argument that this could be the case in any location. Dan then retorts that there is a higher level of it in Mississippi, shade at which they both chuckle. He finishes by discussing a friend of his from Mississippi and her fear of racism, while affecting a mock-Southern accent. When topics become uncomfortable, Dan tends to use the hedge "like" more frequently. This can be perceived as a means of mitigating the force of his speech, in this case, the FTA of shading Cody's hometown which obviously lead to conflict. Though Dan is the initiator of this moment, during the negotiation, more precisely the moment riddled with "likes," he is actually the *Defender*, tasked with the challenge of holding his ground and justifying his shade while minimizing the impact of

the FTA. As the two go back and forth, they flip positioning a number of times, maintaining equal footing but navigating around a clearly negative stance (-) and one another.

Transcript 4.6 "Well, you can do that!" (Jabari- GBM)

In the following clip, Dan begins by asking Jabari (GBM) to discuss what it means to "act straight" to which Jabari takes a pause, sucks his teeth (Rickford and Rickford 1976) and retorts "well you can do that. You define it" (Lines 1149-50). In this case, Jabari outright calls Dan out and puts the entire conversation in his hands. He places the burden of conversation on Dan and demands a response, by taking on the persona of *Challenger* and placing Dan in the position of *Defender*. This implies that Jabari did not see the conversation as an equilateral exchange of ideas. Dan's quiet response is a coy "really? Well, what did I say?" as he feigns forgetfulness and places the discussion back in the hands of Jabari who repeats Dan's description of a stereotypical Straight Male.

Exchange #1	**@33 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1147	Dan	@how would you define acting straight	
1148	Jabari	(.)	
1149		((teeth-suck)) well you can do that	Call out
1150		you define it	direct order
1151		whatchu say a minute ago	/whatchu/
1152	Dan	are you asking me	copula present
1153	Jabari	no you said it a minute ago	
1154	Dan	what did I say	Do support
1155	Jabari	you said when you see a lumberjack you see (.) um	

Exchange #1	**@33 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1156		flannel and a orange beard	a + vowel initial word
1157		Red	
1158		and an axe chopping wood and a big White burly Male	
1159		with broad shoulders	
1160		would that not be defined as a Straight man	Directness
1161	Dan	lemme see	
1162		um I guess that's like	hedges: um, like, I guess
1163		I guess that's acting Straight	
1164		but for me personally I guess it's just like	
1165		defined as the opposite of acting Gay	
1166		and (.)	
1167	Jabari	so what is acting Gay	
1168	Dan	ion- ion really know	Deletion of [d]
1169		these are just words that we use you know	Hedge
1170		ways that we just interact with people	
1171		I'm just @@	
1172		I just think that	
1173		um (.) just the heteronormative ideas of like masculinity	um
1174		and stuff and like embracing those	Hedge
1175		those are what acting Straight composes	

Exchange #1	**@33 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	**Feature**
1176		and everything else that follows is like a branching off
1177		From that origin spot

Once again, Dan has managed to navigate around a call-out (and potential conflict) by shifting the attention away from himself, a tactic he frequently employs. He places himself in a lower vertical position and asks Jabari to jog his memory, using that simple question as another means of holding onto his position as the non-respondent in the conversation though it seems that Jabari has attempted to take the reigns. This Transcript presents several moments of confrontation and negotiation during which Dan, as the *Defender*, employs less "powerful" speech such as self-corrections. In this moment, Dan does not use AAL and uses few to no features linked to “powerful” speech. Jabari employs a significant amount of AAL features alongside direct speech around which Dan must situate himself. Jabari’s performance was riddled with aggressive power marked speech alongside the use of AAL (“I’m not gon’ be the only bitch in here speaking!” Line 695). The expressions were clearly understood and received by Dan marking at the very least a working knowledge of the variety and its usage. This presentation of "powerful" speech with AAL would reproduce the association of the variety with “aggressive speech” (and thus the association of Blackness with aggression).

Jabari completely places the onus of conversation onto Dan making him the *Defender* and taking on the position of power. Beginning with a classic suck-teeth, an indi-

cator which could easily be interpreted as a mark of aggression, he dives in with "well you can do that" as if he was not obliged to answer the question. Though the two are not necessarily competing for the floor, Jabari's dominant personality does put Dan, the facilitator, in a position that *creates a negative stance between them*. No one asked him if Dan was capable of answering the question. He was asked to do it, yet he made the task Dan's to fulfill. He follows by issuing the order "you do it" to Dan, taking his previous commentary about the performativity of gender and marking, (the speech act of both imitating and teasing (Green 2002; Mitchell-Kernan 1972) via voicing.

This Transcript presents several moments of confrontation and negotiation during which Dan employs less "powerful" speech such as self-corrections like "that's not what I mean" and laughter, perhaps as a means of neutralizing power, as the two speak in jest. In this moment, Dan has not used AAL and has used few to no features linked to "powerful" speech. Rather, he is attempting to negotiate an aggressive move made by Jabari (as the *Challenger*) placing him in a position of defense, and thus relative powerlessness.

Jabari makes it clear in this clip that this is not an equal conversation and he is not okay with it. He aggressively calls out Dan for his lack of participation. To this very direct call-out, Dan simply replies. No evasion, no maneuvers, just a response about him never having heard the phrase "lumber woman." He then describes heteronormative masculinity (the topic of discussion) as a White Male lumberjack. This is a continuation of the previous call-out during the defining Straight segment and occurs over 30 minutes into the conversation when a comfort-level should have been established between the speakers. His discussion of this trope reproduces stereotypical notions of Straight identity

as power based, active, and heteronormative. His marking of this hypothetical Brawny like figure as White should not be taken for granted as an influential element of said notions of Straight identity as White by default.

Authority

The label *Authority* automatically denotes a vertical discrepancy in positioning, implying that one speaker is vertically postured above the other as either in control or the expert in that moment. Either way, there is an acceptance of each participant's positioning, no conflict and a generally positive stance. What separates the *Authority* from *Interviewer* is that, instead of a null stance, the stance presented is marked as positive. In cases where the *Authority* persona is invoked, there is generally a consensus that Dan is the expert on the topic about which he is speaking, which creates a positive alignment. Despite this, there is still potential for power to surface as speakers are not on equal footing. However, one cannot ignore the implication of power as non-combattive and even beneficial for the powerless as would be the case for roles of leadership. The *Authority* persona creates space for interactions in which power exists without conflict and is accepted by all speakers involved, blurring the boundaries between *Authority* and *Comrade*.

The persona of *Authority* is often cast or projected by those who do not share knowledge or experiences of the *Authority* figure. In the case of this study, that knowledge and experience are linked to identity group memberships, particularly those of race and sexuality. Out-group members who wish to elicit information may often frame Dan as the persona of *Authority* as a means of avoiding the FTA of soliciting anything, particularly if they are in a position of privilege.

Transcript 4.7 "White settings" (Mary Jane- BiWF)

In this next clip, Dan is cast as an Authority as he is tasked with negotiating the precarious topic race of in discussion with Mary Jane. As Dan expounds on his personal experience of having to exist in White spaces, he has no issue taking over the conversation (unlike his Interview persona or proclivity to avoid conversational dominance).

Exchange #4	**@36 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1623	Dan	I get it yeah	
1624		Cause like	Hedge
1625	Mary Jane	So	
1626	Dan	Yeah cause I know like a lot of people	
1627		Or like a lotta Black people	
1628		Like who do do jus like	Hedge, repetition
1629		Don't interact	
1630		That much with White people on campus	
1631		And like I totally understand that	
1632		Cause it's jus like	
1633		Sometimes when you go into White settings you know	Hedge
1634		Or you might not know	Self-correction
1635		But it's jus like	Jus
1636		It's jus	
1637		It jus	
1638		Speak differently about different subjects	

Exchange #4	**@36 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1639		And like the words that they use	
1640		And like jus	
1641		I dunno like	
1642		Jus jokes that they tell sometimes	
1643		It’s jus like not relatable	
1644		And sometimes it just might be racist	
1645		Cause like	
1646	Mary Jane	Mhm	
1647	Dan	If they tell like a race joke	
1648		And it’s just like	
1649		That’s not funny	
1650		But everybody else in the room is laughing	
1651		And it’s jus like	
1652		You’re the only Black person there	
1653		And it’s like	
1654		What am I supposed to do	
1655		About this	
1656	Mary Jane	Yeah	
1657		Yeah	
1658	Dan	It’s the very like awkward	
1659		And like experience that like	
1660		Alot of people just don’t	
1661		Like have the time for	

Exchange #4	**@36 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1662		They don't feel comfortable like going to White people	
1663		And like opening up themselves to that	no nasal fronting
1664		When they could just be around Black people	
1665		And be fine	
1666	Mary Jane	Yeah it's like	
1667		Why put yourself in a situation	
1668	Dan	Yeah	

In this clip, Dan speaks with Mary Jane, (BiWF) about the self-isolation of Black people in largely White environments and the dangers that can accompany cultural participation. He uses careful speech and the 3rd person plural pronoun when referring to White people as an apparent means of navigating around implicating her in this narrative and avoiding the potential "I'm not racist" reaction. This is evident largely from an overt exclusion of her from the narrative (avoiding the 2nd person plural pronoun). This seems to be largely unnecessary as Mary Jane is completely supportive of his narrative and openly discusses race in other Transcripts comfortably. However, as Dan is describing a very common uncomfortable experience for people of color (POC), it is not surprising for him to be cautious about how he navigates around White fragility (DiAngelo 2018) while sharing his truth as not to come off too critical or aggressive.

Further, Dan speaks in MAE, carefully articulating as he discusses White identity in relation to Blackness. In this moment, it is clear that Dan is mindful of his speech as he navigates discussing a race he does not possess, using hesitant and arguably powerless speech. This approach was used earlier by Dan when discussing race with Marc (BiWM).

Comrade

Finally, the persona of *Comrade* yields both a positive stance alignment and equal vertical footing between speakers removing all potential power dynamics and making space for solidarity to take place as evidenced by a complete symmetry between speakers and the cessation of power as a factor between the interlocutors.

Transcript 4.8 "Ya'll could say somethin'." (Kelsey- BiBF)

Exchange #3	**@25 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1109	Dan	I've never like been in a White community	
1110		So like I dunno	
1111		But jus- like	
1112		In my own community	Hedge
1113		Specifically	
1114		Like we have this uncle and like	Pronounced release
1115		He has a roommate	
1116		But like they been roommates	They been
1117		Like like my whole life?	Final rising inton.
1118	Kelsey	staaahp@@@@	lex.
1119	Dan	Like literally my whole life	Hedge

Exchange #3	**@25 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1120		And is jus- =like	overlapping speech
1121	Kelsey	=staaahhp^	
1122	Dan	I'm like o-kayy	Hedge
1123		Like ya'll could	Hedge
1124		Y'all could say somethin'	Ya'll, nasal fronting
1125		Like =please	
1126	Kelsey	=yeah	overlapping speech
1127	Dan	Somebody like speak on this	
1128		Like elucidate me	
1129	Kelsey	@@@	
1130	Dan	Its jus- like	Hedge
1131		I- it's so obvious	
1132	Kelsey	Right	
1133	Dan	like that's the thing	
1134	Kelsey	Like (.) stop	
1135	Dan	And then like his roommate	Hedge
1136		Like moved out for a little bit	Hedge
1137	Kelsey	@@	
1138	Dan	Cause they got upset	
1139		And then like he moved back in	
1140		it was jus- like	
1141		"ºBut they're just roommates"	

Exchange #3	**@25 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1142	Kelsey	@@@@	
1143	Dan	I'm like ok	
1144		Jus- like alright	
1145	Kelsey	Right	
1146	Dan	Please like	
1147	Kelsey	Right	
1148	Dan	I know Imma child but still	Imma

As Dan describes his family narrative with Kelsey (BiBF- Bicurious Black Female), he begins with the 1st person plural pronoun "we", presumably referring to his familial cousins, but the use of the 1st person plural instead of the singular (or even the singular plus a 3rd person reference to his other family members) could be seen as a means of incorporating Kelsey into the narrative by creating an inclusive narrative via the "we." Before he can complete the description of his familial situation, Kelsey indicates that she knows full well what the "Gay uncle" experience is like as it is a not uncommon occurrence within the Black community to have an unacknowledged Gay family member. One would argue this to be probable in any family regardless of race, but the Black community has a distinct cultural experience that comes along with having a Gay family member that finds its roots in a heritage laced with specific religious and cultural historic ties. Her laughter and "stahp's[11]" further indicate this cultural familiarity. As Dan contin-

[11] The term "stahp" serves as a dramatized variation of "stop" which, often implies a sense of shock similar to the expression "get out of here!"

ues his narrative, he makes it clear that his family (like many Black families) does not overtly "closet" his uncle but maintains a silence about his identity opting for the "keep it in the closet approach." The two bond over this shared experience of the humorous futility of familial closeting as Dan remarks on how evident his uncle's sexual identity is. The narrative is ended as Dan voices his family's attempt at secrecy invoking laughter from Kelsey and solidifying their rapport.

4.3 NEGOTIATING IDENTITIES

The cultural association of gender with power finds its roots in the theoretical assumption of gender-based complementarity. Treatments of masculinity or Maleness as the ultimate portrayal of strength (be it via dominance over women or other men) has been the hegemonic benchmark of what it means to be a Male in a heteronormative society. Relatively then, to be a woman is to be the complement to Male strength, existing on the other end of the power dyad as powerless by comparison. This binary approach and its associations have proven to be quite limiting and have produced countless (arguably toxic) stereotypes about what it means to perform one's gender as it relates to power. In this section, I will explore Dan's negotiation of his gender, those of his interlocutors, and the means by which he negotiates gender-related power norms, with both in-group and out-group members.

Transcript 4.9 "That is so crazy, Kelsey" (Kelsey- BiBF)

This first interaction is with Kelsey, a BiBF which occurs very early in the conversation (1:30 into the conversation). Kelsey and Dan speak about race on campus and as the conversation progresses, Dan navigates his shared racial experience with Kelsey

(leading to a positive stance) alongside his self-described Male gender identity as well as his positioning as the *Interviewer*.

Exchange #3	**@1:30 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
66	Kelsey	But this is no like African-American studies	
67		Like I haven't even taken an African-American studies class	
68	Dan	Really	
69	Kelsey	Like I am so like =over here	
70	Dan	=You've never taken one	overlapping speech
71	Kelsey	I'm so not woke@	
72	Dan	Are you a sen-	self-interruption
73	Kelsey	@@	
74	Dan	Are you a senior	
75	Kelsey	yes@@@@	laughter
76	Dan	Oh noooo	
77	Kelsey	@@@ I come from Oxford so maybe that	
78	Dan	Ugghhhhh	gagging
79		Oh honey	discourse marker
80	Kelsey	That's why I feel like	
81	Dan	They don't have African-American-@@	
82	Kelsey	@@	
83	Dan	They don't have classes there	
84	Kelsey	Like one and a half	

Exchange #3	**@1:30 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
85		So	
86	Dan	((Gag))	Literal gagging
87	Kelsey	Right	
88		And I tried to take one	
89		But like I wouldn't have a lunch	
90		But anyway	
91		Yeah	
92	Dan	It's too late now	
93	Kelsey	Right	
94		@@@	
95	Dan	Wooooooww	
96	Kelsey	We gotta get outta here	
97	Dan	That is so crazy Kelsey	
98	Kelsey	@@	
99	Dan	So crazy	
100	Kelsey	@@@@	

At the beginning of their encounter, Dan and Kelsey (BiBF) discuss courses at the University. Though Kelsey does have the upper hand based on age/seniority, this positioning is quickly diminished when it is made known that she is less formally informed about race theory than she would like to be. Kelsey remarks that she has never taken an African-American studies class and refers to herself as not "woke" -- a now Mainstreamed AAL term which is generally used to describe those who are conscious and well

informed, particularly pertaining to matters of the Black cultural experience. Additionally, this term has also come to be used as demeaning when one wants to describe an overly philosophical, hypercritical, and serious person who may not be able to take anything with levity. Kelsey's usage of "woke", however, is positive as she exhibits admiration for his knowledge and positions him as an expert academic (and Black) *Authority* by comparison, effectively removing all power that would be assumed to be attributed to her elder status. The stance taken towards the topic and one another is positive, not surprising as both speakers share the same culture and history around which the discussion is centered.

During the interaction, Kelsey laughs at her own ignorance as she knows this lack of coursework is an unspoken faux pas for the Black intelligentsia. Dan then asks about her year (indirectly referring to her age) which is a senior. As a freshman, Dan assumed that Kelsey would not only have taken at least one Black studies course during her tenure at the University but that she would invoke her assumed higher status associated with age to position herself as the powerful figure. Instead, the opposite is the case and the power dynamics shift as indicated by Dan's use of "honey" when referring to her in a familiar way which could be interpreted as slightly patronizing such as "bless your heart" might for Southerners. It should be noted that this discourse marker is also used within the Gay community to establish a connection with fellow members. The term can also be used by Gay men when speaking to women as a means of expressing familiarity just as two women might. He follows the discourse marker "honey" with a sound similar to the vocal fry but one that is uvular and less consistent in turbulence caused by a raised tongue/dor-

sum. This blockage is prolonged resulting in turbulent frication and emulating the process of gagging. I use this term purposefully as Dan is indeed literally gagging but also because the lexical item "gag" is used by speakers of GMS to index shock and disbelief. Here, he draws on features associated with femininity and Gay identity (by way of misguided proxy) by yielding power in an endeavor towards solidarity. He could very well have taken up the power based persona of *Authority* as presented by Kelsey when she marks him as woke, creating a vertical upper hand. He could have invoked a hegemonic masculinity which has historically been centered around asserting himself over her not unlike the effects of "mansplaining," but he opted instead to index solidarity by drawing on their shared experience as Black students with the *Comrade* persona. Dan draws on his Gay identity (and the assumed connection with female speakers) and this persona to solidify this familial association, rejecting the power associated with his gender, opting for a more equilateral interaction. The two agree that she definitely should have taken a course and that it's too late as they giggle at the circumstances suggesting a sense of rapport.

Kelsey's laughter and banter index a sense of equality between the two during this moment of talk, pointing to a lack of vertical positioning of one over the other. These in conjunction with the equal conversational participation invoke the persona of *Comrade* leading to a sense of solidarity between Dan and Kelsey as they partake in a moment of bonding linked to not only their shared racial experiences, but arguably their shared experiences of race within non-White spaces such as the classroom (university) settings as well as within the Black culture which places value of cultural knowledge and wokeness.

This solidarity is a direct result of Dan abandoning the power associated with his presumed gender performance as masculine based on his sex and drawing on his sexual identity as a bridge with which he could align with Kelsey.

Transcript 4.10 "I'm not a girl!" (Jabari- GBM)

Here, Dan and Jabari are enjoying a playful moment of shade when the conversation takes a momentary turn towards conflict. Just after Dan uses the word "ubiquitous," Jabari compliments him and follows with a bit of his own shade as he implies that Dan's source of education is online classes. He then teases with "catch that shade" pointing to the requirement that the speaker on the receiving end detect or "catch" the shade and indicating that the hearer indeed holds the shared cultural competency on which the insult is based. Should the shade be proverbially dropped, the insult intensifies (Cornelius and Barrett 2019). In this case, Dan does catch the shade (i.e., he interprets it accurately), but the playful banter quickly takes a turn towards the serious as the stance between the two falls out of alignment leading to conflict.

Exchange #1	**@22 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
772	Dan	took a few classes or whatever	
773	Jabari	@@ yes yes	
774		online	Shade
775		catch that shade	"catch"
776	Dan	@@ yeah	
777	Jabari	so would you identify yourself as a Gay * Male	

Exchange #1	**@22 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
778	Dan	uh yeah yeah	
779	Jabari	uh girl ((unintelligible)) my big sister-	
780	Dan	-I'm not a girl!	
781		why do you say girl	
782		what's that mean	
783		what do you mean by girl you're like	
784		GIRl girl, sis like	
785		what's that mean.	
786	Jabari	((suck teeth))	suck teeth
787		nothing it's just	
788		vernacular	
789		for the Gays	
790	Dan	oh for the Gays	
791	Jabari	well I dunno	
792		I mean like I wouldn't say it's for the Gays but	
793		uh huh	
794		the Gays use it	
795	Dan	so (.)	
796		so you use it	
797	Jabari	only in certain settings	
798	Dan	like what	
799	Jabari	I'm comfortable right now	
800	Dan	oh	
801	Jabari	so I'm like okay	

Exchange #1	**@22 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
802	Dan	okay so you're comfortable around me	
803	Jabari	yeah we'll say that	
804	Dan	okay	
805	Jabari	I mean at this point=	
806	Dan	=mhm	
807	Jabari	yeah	
808		we're like cool peoples	
809	Dan	cool	
810		so can we h@	
811		let's get back to the other thing	
812	Jabari	she said a natural conversation	
813	Dan	performance of gender	
814		no I had a question okay	
815		because (unintelligible) this	
816		cause you tried it=	
817	Jabari	=@sh	
818	Dan	Like answer it	
819		before how do you perform gender	
820		do you like just piss	
821		and like that's it	
822	Jabari	i don- I don'	
823	Dan	piss and you're a man	
824	Jabari	okay explain this question to me	
825	Dan	How do you perform your gender like everyday	

Exchange #1	**@22 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
826	Jabari	I live	
827		that's it	

Here, Jabari mumbles under his breath a comment that begins with the discourse marker "girl" to which Dan viscerally reacts proclaiming "I'm not a girl!." He continues by demanding to know what it is that Jabari means when he says "girl" or "sis," suggesting a complete lack of familiarity with the AAL/AAWL discourse markers, which are also found in the repertoire of Gay Black men (and the Gay community more broadly). This lack of understanding is hard to believe given Dan's seeming familiarity with countless other discourse strategies and in-group knowledge associated with Gay Male Speech (GMS) and AAL, such as call-outs, reading, and the shade interaction which directly precedes this one. Rather, this appears to be an effort at feigning ignorance. Furthermore, Dan uses gender-related discourse markers associated with WL/GMS such as "girl" or "honey" with feMale speakers (see above Transcript 4.9 with Kelsey). It would seem then that such a visceral reaction is indicative of Dan taking offense at being called "girl" and attempting to protect and assert his sense of masculinity in response. In doing so, Dan draws on the persona of *Challenger*, raising his voice and initiating a confrontation with Jabari. Dan's visceral reaction to Jabari's use of the discourse marker points to a seeming interpretation of the term as a threat to which he presents a negative stance, paired with demonstrations of dominance, as evidenced by a raised voice, an interruption, and more

aggressive speech. In this moment, Dan positions himself above Jabari by drawing on the *Challenger* persona and creating space for a potential conflict between the two. He invokes the historical association of hyper masculinity with Male identity, as he contests what is apparently interpreted as a threat to his gendered identity. Jabari is then placed on the defense and forced to explain himself and what "girl" means when used in such a manner, how it is "for the Gays" and how he only uses it with those he is comfortable with. This invocation of familiarity goes a long way towards mitigating the force of the perceived FTA and reframes it as innocent and possibly intended to index solidarity instead of conflict.

Transcript 4.11 "Can I ask you?" (Mary Jane- BiWF)

In the next Transcript, Mary Jane (BiWF) is in the midst of responding to a query issued by Dan when she interrupts herself and draws on polite speech to inquire if she is allowed to ask Dan the very same questions that he is asking. Interestingly enough, Dan remarks at the beginning of the conversation that this is indeed designed to be an interactive event with both parties participating. He explicitly states this in almost every interview, yet the interactions do not take place in a manner in which the participants appear to feel there to be a truly bilateral conversation, making it reminiscent of his interaction with Marc (Example 4.2). This request suggests that she had no understanding that equality between the two was the expectation despite the fact that Dan had shared with her the desired format. This lack of clarity cannot be purely coincidental, and there are multiple factors to consider here, but what is notable is that certain speakers (e.g., Marc and Mary Jane) automatically adapt this positioning of Dan as the person in control and act accord-

ingly, while others (e.g., Jabari and Barry) challenge this positioning. Mary Jane asserts that she didn't know if she was "supposed to" be asking permission, taking on the powerless position of *Interviewee* with her focus seemingly resting on his comfort with the role of *Interviewer*. Dan turns around the scenario and makes it clear that if she so desires she may ask questions, making it about what she wants but maintaining the upper hand (perhaps drawing on the power with which his gender is associated) as if to say, "I'll allow it," thus reifying her positioning of him as the *Interviewer* and retaining his posture of power in the conversation.

Exchange #4	**@12 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
453	Mary Jane	—Wait can I ask you these questions?	Interruption
454	Dan	I mean you can yeah	
455	Mary Jane	Oh	
456	Dan	Yeah this is **like** a discussion	Hedge
457		So **like** we gotta go back and forth	
458		Like if you really want to	
459	Mary Jane	Okay well I would love to hear your answers	
460		I didn't know if I was s'posed to—	
461	Dan	—So like do I like my gender?	Interruption
462	Mary Jane	Yeah	
463	Dan	Uh- I mean like	

Exchange #4	**@12 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
464		I guess I'm kinda ambivalent toward it	Hedges
465		I don't really care	
466		It's just like	
467		If I were born a woman	
468		Or like I wouldn't feel like	
469		An innate desire to become a man	
470		Or like feel like an innate trans-ness in myself	
471		To become a man	
472		It's **just** like something I was born with	just, no nasal fronting
473		And I'm just like	
474		'okay I'll just roll with it'	
475		**Because**	vs. cause in 483
476		I guess in my own context	
477		I like both like men's and women's clothing	
478	Mary Jane	Mhm	
479	Dan	It's **jus-**	CC reduction
480		Whatever looks best on me	
481		I'll just I'll just wear it	
482	Mary Jane	ºYesº ((snap snap))	
483	Dan	**ºCause** it **jus-** It doesn't matter to me that muchº	quiet phonation, cause

Exchange #4	**@12 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
484	Mary Jane	So then	
485		Do you mind if I ask	
486		Do you identify as a Malethen	
487	Dan	Uh **I mean** yeah **I guess** yeah	Hedges
488	Mary Jane	Umkay	
489	Dan	I mean people	
490		Can call me like	
491		*Girl* or like whatever	Girl, pounds table for emphasis
492	Mary Jane	Mhm	
493	Dan	Cause it doesn't matter to me at all	
494		But thas jus me	
495		But I- I do know like	
496		Gender like is an experience	
497		Its a very real experience	
498		For other people	
499	Mary Jane	Mhm	
500	Dan	So it's jus- but for me personally I don't feel anything	
501	Mary Jane	Mhm	
502	Dan	To-ward it	

Dan acquiesces to the request but not eagerly, placing the onus of conversation on the other participant with the remark "I mean you can, yeah." This lackluster allowance makes it clear that she is permitted to ask and that he is not thoroughly excited about the tables being turned as he clearly prefers the *Interviewer* position. He again clarifies that this is to be a back and forth discussion yet follows that statement up with "if you really *want* to" making it about her desire to know more than his desire to share, delivering a mixed message to Mary Jane about the nature of the conversation. Because the questions asked were directly from the prepared Interview protocol (Appendix B), they present little to no stance as they are not personally addressed. This neutrality, paired with having to respond to Mary Jane's initiation, places Dan in the position of *Interviewee*. This persona is further evidenced by careful speech riddled with hedges alongside the absence of verticality and conflict between the two. Mary Jane's politeness and seemingly general interest in Dan's answers remove the threat which would otherwise place Dan in the position of *Defender*.

Mary Jane exhibits a clear interest in Dan's sense of identity and makes that evident in this effort to provide space for him to share instead of an assumed shift in power dynamics that seems to guide Dan's approach. After this, Dan begins to share his thoughts and experiences about gender. She encourages this sharing with two snaps and a "yes" (Line 482) — discursive elements linked to both the Gay community and the Black community specifically over time (I*n Living Color* sketch comedy show). While this act could be interpreted as patronizing and potentially cultural appropriation (given it comes from a White woman) the effect seems to be one of establishing a connection and build-

ing solidarity through the use of a now shared discursive action (the snaps and "yes" have indeed crossed over to the overlapping/shared space between WL and GMS). She continues by asking about his gender identity with very polite language (see e.g., "I didn't know if I was s'posed to" in Line 460), demonstrating no sense of power. What is fascinating is that in his response, Dan makes it explicit that he is very comfortable with his gender and that someone could call him "girl" without him being offended. This statement stands in stark contrast to his reaction (in an earlier interview) to Jabari's use of the discourse marker calling into question Dan's apparent ignorance of and outrage towards its use. Like his interaction with Kelsey (the other female speaker), in this scenario, he seems not to be concerned about his gender performance, dismissing any preoccupation with it. Instead, he treats it as a neutral, drawing on the space Mary Jane has provided and enacting the *Interviewee* persona to do so.

Based on historical avoidance of responding to questions and repeated call outs for lack of input, Dan is evidently uncomfortable with this position and prefers to be the *Interviewer*, so it is no surprise that the plethora of "like's" surface. He challenges norms of gender identity and masculinity by claiming his comfort despite his gender, expressing his enjoyment of elements associated with both sides of the heteronormative dyad to include clothing. This approach can be potentially controversial, leading to a shift from a neutral stance to one that is negative, so it is understandable for Dan to be careful and to use the hedge to mitigate his speech.

Much like the interaction with Kelsey, Dan draws on a persona which yields power instead of asserting it. Though he is framed as *Interviewee* by his interlocutor, he could

easily have flipped the power dynamics by avoiding or redirecting the questions (a tactic he frequently draws on). Instead, Dan yields the power and positioning associated with masculinity and allows the inversion to take place. Dan appears to index his gender differently based on those of his interlocutors, invoking the history of masculinity in relation to other Males, yet opting for the socialization and overlap of cis-female and Gay Male identities.

Heteronormative ideologies have framed Gay identity as a deviation from heterosexuality as the standardized norm and power-based hegemony. Dan's membership within the LGBTQ+ community automatically places him at a presumed power disadvantage despite his gender or race, both of which are associated with power, rooting Maleness in dominance and Blackness in aggression (see Chapter 2). Further, hegemonic prescriptions of masculinity deem Gay identity a deviation from standardized norms of Male identity, placing Gay men in contrast to masculinity and powerless by comparison, on par with femininity- the only other option in a binary view of gender and sexuality. These limitations have subsequently led to the conflation of gender and sexuality and created a set of stringent prescriptions that are virtually impossible to navigate with corresponding power norms that are even more difficult to negotiate. In this section, I examine Dan's negotiation of his Gay identity during interactions with Straight men (both Black and White) and the ways in which he draws on the power-based personae of *Interviewer, Authority,* and *Defender* to enact said negotiations.

Transcript 4.12 "I think you know what this question is really asking…" (Cody-SBM)

In this interaction, Dan and Cody (SBM) are discussing Gay identity, particularly as that which is performative, when Cody's lack of comfort with the topic puts him in the position of *Interviewee* as Dan pushes for an answer, indexing a vertical positioning in terms of conversational uptake and approval (or lack thereof) of Cody's response.

Exchange #5	**@25 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1103	Dan	Mhm	
1104		Uh so like what would you define as acting Gay	No nasal fronting
1105	Cody	((suck teeth)) uhh	Suck teeth
1106		(2.0) when a-	Self-interruption
1107		Gay is happy	
1108		when you're happy	
1109	Dan	@	
1110	Cody	What do you mean	
1111	Dan	I think you	
1112		@I think you know what this question is really asking ya know@	No nasal fronting
1113		There's no need to	
1114		divert or	
1115		be avoidant	
1116	Cody	I mean I kinda answered the question so	
1117	Dan	I don't think you have	

Exchange #5	**@25 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1118		H	
1119	Cody	Umm	
1120	Dan	=@@@@@@@	
1121	Cody	=Basically um	
1122		is when you're happy and when you	
1123	Dan	@	
1124	Cody	havin' a great-	
1125		I'm just playin'	
1126		Um	
1127	Dan	Okay Cody	
1128	Cody	Thank you	
1129	Dan	Umkay	
1130	Cody	Um (3.0)	
1131		it's when a Male wants another man	
1132		basically	
1133	Dan	That's acting Gay like that's it	
1134	Cody	I mean	
1135		Ion think there's a act	
1136	Dan	Mhm	
1137	Cody	cause	
1138		I think people mix it up with uh	
1139		Like d- when dudes act very feminine	
1140	Dan	Mhm	
1141	Cody	But I've seen Straight dudes act feminine	

Exchange #5	**@25 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1142	Dan	Yeah	
1143	Cody	That doesn't make him Gay	
1144	Dan	Yeah	
1145	Cody	He jus have feminine qualities or	Jus' have
1146		It just	
1147		that's just him	
1148	Dan	Mhm	
1149	Cody	You know	
1150	Dan	So	
1151	Cody	Yeah	

Here, Dan asks Cody, (SBM) what he defines as acting Gay, to which Cody offers the snarky response "Gay is happy, right" feigning ignorance of the true nature of the question. Dan then calls Cody out by piercing through said facade, demonstrating control by not allowing him to evade the question. In this moment, we see elements of power surface as Dan all but demands a sincere response from Cody. This behavior is in complete contrast with cultural stereotypes of Gay men diverging from hegemonic portrayals of masculinity (read power driven) and even subverts the idea as this Gay Male directly challenges a Straight Male (who might be presumed by society to be more powerful). What is interesting is that, while Dan does draw on the *Interviewer* and *Challenger* personae, demanding an answer by refusing to give up, he does not do so in a stereotypically aggressive manner. He remains indirect asserting that he doesn't think Cody has an-

swered the question in a satisfactory manner. His voice is not markedly deep and he uses few to no linguistic elements associated with aggressive speech. At best, we hear a suck-teeth (Line 1105) which has historically been linked to aggression (via disdain often) or dissent in the African-American speech community (Rickford and Rickford 1976). On the other hand, Cody's use of indirect speech, long pauses, and hesitant speech, all point to a position of powerlessness as he is being challenged by Dan. This implies that allowing a speaker to demonstrate their position of powerlessness can be just as effective as employing powerful speech when challenging them.

Cody is clearly avoiding the question while Dan pushes him with a tactic shrouded in jest. It would almost seem flirtatious between the two but they eventually reach a resolve due to the pushing of Dan with lines like "you don't need to act avoidant." The fact that Cody wishes to avoid answering the question point blank places him in the less powerful position of *Interviewee* and by not overtly refusing, which would reaffirm his power, he is doubly placed in the position to be, at best, cajoled into answering and, at worst, called out for not answering as his lack of acquiescence demonstrates a weakness (fear?) in not wanting to deal with the real which contrasts with heteronormative treatments of Straight masculine behavior.

The use of pre-determined questions keeps the stance between Dan and Cody neutral, but Cody's refusal to answer the question in a straightforward manner contributes to Dan asserting himself as *Interviewer*, placing him in an imbalanced vertical position. Here, as Dan negotiates a potential offense towards his sexual identity (bordering on a negative stance) via Cody's avoidance, Dan maintains his position and indexes power,

drawing on a narrative which challenges hegemonic views towards Gay men. He pulls from his *Interviewer* status and remains neutral as he rejects Cody's inadequate response, doing so in a manner which is not overly aggressive. Without directly pushing Cody, Dan gently yet firmly makes it clear that the provided answer is insufficient and will not be accepted. This is both a challenge and reproduction of historical associations of power with Gay Male identity as Dan is clever and indirect (powerlessness associated with Gay Male identity) yet firm and consistent, a challenge to assumptions of Gay men as less masculine and thus less powerful.

Transcript 4.13 "Do you know what shade is?" (Barry O.- SWM)

Another persona that Dan draws on to negotiate his sexuality with out-group members is that of *Authority.* What made the interaction with Cody problematic was the possibility of a negative stance which could have led to conflict. There are cases, however of Straight men who are completely comfortable with discussing sexuality and who do not mind learning from an expert. Such is the case in this next interaction with Barry O. (SWM). Like Kelsey (See Example 4.9), Barry O. frames Dan as the expert, accepting his lack of knowledge, leading to a positive stance.

Exchange #6	**@39 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1531	Barry O.	And so that is your physiology	
1532		And so it affects the way that you articulate (.)	
1533		I dunno	
1534	Dan	Umkay	

Exchange #6	**@39 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1535		Cause I can see that but it's just also like (.)	
1536		The words that you use or like characterize the environments	
1537		That you're around	
1538	Barry O.	Sure	
1539	Dan	So like if you just	
1540		Around like a whole bunch of Gay men all the time	
1541		Then you're gonna pick up words that they use	
1542		And use those like and incorporate those into	
1543		I guess your common day vernacular-	
1544	Barry O.	-yeah maybe	Interruption
1545		But I'm trine	
1546		I'm struggling to figure out what that	
1547		Would be	
1548	Dan	Like Gay words	
1549	Barry O.	Yeah like what are Gay words@	
1550	Dan	Wh- oh you don't know @@	
1551		It's like a whole notha language no?	
1552	Barry O.	Is it I dunno	
1553	Dan	Oh my god	
1554		Do you know what a Kiki is	
1555	Barry O.	No	

Exchange #6	**@39 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1556	Dan	Aw yeah	
1557		That's a Gay word	
1558		Do you know what shade is	
1559	Barry O.	(.) I mean I know what	
1560		Literally what shade is	
1561	Dan	Like shade	
1562		Like	
1563	Barry O.	Throwing shade?	
1564	Dan	Yeah like	
1565	Barry O.	Oh	
1566		Sure yeah	
1567	Dan	Yeah	
1568	Barry O.	Is that a Gay word	
1569	Dan	yeah	
1570	Barry O.	Really?	
1571	Dan	Yeah the Gays made it	
1572		Yeah	
1573	Barry O.	Really	
1574	Dan	Yeah	
1575	Barry O.	I didn't know that	
1576	Dan	You know what reading is	
1577	Barry O.	No	
1578	Dan	Yeah see	
1579	Barry O.	I know =literally what reading is	

Exchange #6	**@39 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1580	Dan	=yeah ___-	
1581		@@	
1582		Yes it's like a whole like	
1583		nother vocabulary like	
1584	Barry O.	Oh wow	
1585		I did not know that at all	
1586	Dan	yeah@@@	
1587		I guess not	
1588	Barry O.	@	
1589		Then I take it back	
1590		I guess there is a language component uh	
1591		But I	
1592	Dan	@@@	
1593	Barry O.	I never thought the @@ I didn't know that	
1594	Dan	Mhm	
1595	Barry O.	Learn somethin' new everyday but	
1596		Nah	
1597		I didn't realize that a language	
1598		That there was actually like a dictional um	
1599		Component of perf- of that identity performance	
1600		I didn't know that	
1601	Dan	Yeah cause it's just like	

Exchange #6	**@39 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1602		I guess also with like	
1603		Black or just like the dialect of like AAUV	
1604		That people use it's just like	
1605		A whole 'nother (.)	
1606	Barry O.	Well that I get	
1607		That I know that there's a language of	
1608	Dan	Yeah	
1609	Barry O.	Um	
1610	Dan	Because there's a st-	
1611		There's literally a study of like American or	
1612		Um like modern African-American English	
1613	Dan	Mhm	
1614	Barry O.	Um that's definitely a linguistic st- like field of study	
1615		I just didn't know that that applied to	
1616		Homosexuality as well as well	
1617	Dan	Yeah	
1618	Barry O.	Well who'd have guessed it	
1619		Not me I guess	
1620	Dan	@@	
1621	Barry O.	I knew there was a manner of speaking	
1622	Dan	@@@	

Exchange #6	**@39 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1623	Barry O.	Not that there was a whole vocabulary	
1624		Not	
1625	Dan	Yeah	
1626	Barry O.	I gotta study up I guess	
1627	Dan	I mean it's a ___don't like get into it you know	
1628	Barry O.	I'm missin' somethin'	
1629	Dan	@@	
1630	Barry O.	@@	
1631	Dan	@no it's not much	

As Dan and Barry O. (SWM) discuss GMS, Barry O. takes an academic/scientific approach to what he understood the variety to be, focusing largely on voice tone. In this scenario, Dan is clearly positioning himself as the expert. He allows Barry O. to speak but follows up with a more authoritative perspective informed by his experience and knowledge of GMS of which Barry O. is completely unaware. He focuses largely on lexical items as a byproduct of group membership introducing "Gay words" (Line 1548) to Barry. Once Barry O. remarks that he is unfamiliar, it is clear that Dan is in his wheelhouse as he begins to *school* Barry O. on this "whole notha vocabulary" (Lines 1582-3). The act of schooling is a means of exerting power by positioning oneself as the *Authority* on a topic and placing the other speaker in the position of a novice who will be taught a lesson. Dan goes through words such as "Kiki" and "shade" explaining the role of multi-

ple meanings in GMS. He tests Barry's familiarity with several terms and with little explanation confirms his lack of membership by saying "yeah that's a Gay word." What is interesting is that, despite the contributions of AAL to GMS's use of shade and reading, he attributes the terms to the Gay Male (presumably White) community as a whole. Now, this could very well be a means of strategic essentialism (Bucholtz 2003) as a brief introduction to GMS for an out-group member (i.e. Straight Male), but it is nonetheless interesting that he gives Gay men (whom he will later remark on as White by default) such credit in regards to such significant terms. This notwithstanding, Dan manages to establish himself as the powerful speaker based largely on the persona of *Authority* despite Barry's prominence in the interaction. Dan's position is made evident by interruptions, raised volume, and overlapping speech. He concludes by appealing to the same sociolinguistic dynamic of AAL with which Barry O. is familiar and drawing similarities between the two identity groups both of which he holds membership in.

At the onset of the interview, as he establishes himself as a legitimized figure of *Authority*, Dan appeals to notions of identity that are linked to cultural legitimation-namely hegemonic structures. Given his race and sexual identity, his minority status would call for him being placed in a position of powerlessness. Yet the inverse is achieved in these interactions. This would presumably be unlikely as Barry O. is both White and Straight (both of which are identities typically associated with power as a result of systemic power dynamics), but again, Dan manages to position himself as powerful relative to Barry, negotiating his sexual identity as paramount.

Here, Dan's actual *Authority* as a Gay Male places him at a vertical advantage given the sheer impact of the topic being within his proverbial wheelhouse. This expertise, paired with a positive stance between him and Barry O. (both in regards to the topic and one another) creates a space in which Barry O. accepts his lack of knowledge as Dan invokes the *Authority* persona. The use of the persona leads to a momentary imbalance which does not move towards conflict given both speakers' acceptance of their knowledge and situation- based positioning.

Transcript 4.14 "Das jus somethin' they don't talk about." (Cody- SBM)

Exchange #5	**@30 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1301	Cody	Mhm	
1302	Dan	you could always go to the church and be Black	
1303		Or like you can't like say "oh yeah I'm Gay"	Hedge
1304		Like who:	
1305		Like they would just be like "be quiet"	Voicing family members
1306		Like "no" or like "just don't say that"	Voicing family members
1307		Cause I know like in my family	Hedge
1308		Like we have two uncle-	Hedge
1309		Or like I have an uncle	Hedge
1310		And he has like a roommate but like	Hedge
1311		It's like it's never been discussed	Hedge

Exchange #5	**@30 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1312		Like it's literally never been brought up but	Hedge
1313		It's like pretty obvious	Hedge
1314	Cody	Yeah	
1315	Dan	Cause his roommate like moved out when they were like	
1316		angry at each other	
1317		An then the roommate moved back in	
1318	Cody	@@@@	
1319	Dan	But like they're still roommates though	
1320		It's like Ion	Copula presence
1321		ion really know how to address that cause like	
1322		Jus like always hiding it and never actually like saying like	Just —> jus, no nasal fronting
1323		Oh yeah this uncle is clearly Gay	Voicing family members
1324	Cody	Mhm	
1325	Dan	Like that's never been a stated fact	
1326		In the family	
1327		And like Iono why people =just don't say	
1328		=like families like that's like a subject	Overlapping speech
1329		That don't get touched	That don't
1330	Cody	Yeah	
1331	Dan	So	

Exchange #5	**@30 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1332	Cody	it’s understandable	
1333	Dan	Wait	Call out
1334		It’s under-	
1335		Why	
1336	Cody	Cause those are	
1337		I feel like in Black households they try to	
1338		Avoid all that drama so they	
1339	Dan	Mhm	
1340	Cody	Don’t talk about it	
1341		So like your uncle	
1342		Das jus somethin’ they don’t talk about	Nasal fronting
1343	Dan	Yeah	
1344	Cody	Everybo- everybody prolly knows	
1345		But they prolly just continue to go	Self-correction
1346		You know let it happen	
1347	Dan	Mhm	
1348	Cody	Like “Oh okay”	
1349	Dan	Yeah	
1350		But I think like not talkin’ about it doesn’t make it	
1351		Any less real or like any less obvious	
1352		And I feel like it would be better to talk about like	
1353		For the family for like other people that might be Gay in the family	

Exchange #5	**@30 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1354		Like me	
1355	Cody	Mhm	
1356	Dan	Like no one ever talks about it though	
1357		It's jus' ((suck teeth))	Just —> jus, Suck teeth
1358	Cody	Well what if they know you are	
1359		And they jus' don't talk about it	Just —> jus
1360	Dan	((suck teeth))	Suck teeth
1361		Iono know	Iono
1362		That'd be crazy right	
1363	Cody	Yeah	
1364	Dan	((suck teeth)) Real crazy	Suck teeth

Here, Dan explores the role of religion in the cultural silencing of Gay people within the Black community. Voicing the Black Church, he employs direct and silencing speech. He then goes on to recount the narrative of his Gay uncle, again using the term "we" as arguably indicative of his family, given the relationship between the two speakers is nowhere near as congenial as with Kelsey (BiBF) (see Example 4.8). The two have yet to bond in the same manner. Still, quiet laughter from Cody (SBM) ensues as he demonstrates the same familiarity with the Gay relative narrative. He doesn't laugh as much as Kelsey and as the relationship isn't as familiar, the conversational tone is more serious giving Dan space to elaborate on the narrative and how he feels about it. He ex-

presses his frustration with his family's silence during which Cody interjects arguing that it is indeed a subject from which Black families shy away. A marked silence is followed by both parties agreeing on the existence of the phenomenon which Cody explains as "understandable" to which Dan immediately contests inquiring why he believes such. Cody describes the desire to avoid "drama" as critical for Black families as he attempts to explicate the cultural occurrence. Dan counters by arguing that silence is an ineffective means of covering up said "drama" and explores the benefits of open discussion for the sake of other family members who may identify as Gay.

In this case, Dan's sexual identity is potentially in jeopardy of being attacked as he must defend it against cultural rejection and closeting. Dan seemed to be in control of the conversation as he critiqued the Black community's homophobia via voicing, but when Cody attempted to justify this behavior, it came as a bit of shock serving as an attack which Dan would have to navigate. This disalignment contributed greatly to a negative stance between the two making space for conflict to ensue. Cody's assertion put Dan on the *Defense* as he urged Cody to explain his position at first, but quieted himself as the conversation continued, almost shrinking away. This approach is not evidence of powerlessness as Dan employs suck teeth, interruptions, demands, and a call out, all typically perceived as markers of powerful behavior. Yet, instead of overtly attacking Cody, Dan draws from a more defensive position and justifies himself and why Black heterosexism is damaging. By drawing on the *Defender* persona, Dan is able to make his point, negotiate the conflict, and do so without creating further discord as he was not the first to cause a lapse in stance equality between the two.

Dan challenges the historical association of Gay Maleness with powerlessness as he takes on the persona of *Authority* with Barry. His use of power, effectively "sons[12]" Cody by placing him in the position of novice. This positioning directly challenges both the historical trope of Gay masculinity as less powerful as well as that of Straight masculinity as dominant, reversing the assumed positioning of the two speakers. Dan finds a number of ways to negotiate the power differentials associated with his sexuality that both challenge and reproduce said norms. His maneuvers are clearly contingent on his interlocutors (leading to audience designed speech use) but it is interesting to note Dan's adaptation based on his speakers' posturing. His adoption of personae appears to be reactive instead of proactive pointing to a sense of autonomy in his processes of negotiation.

The associations of race with power are particularly nuanced, notably in regards to Blackness. Though Whiteness has been established as the hegemonic norm and system of power in the U.S. through centuries of dominance and control, the narrative of Blackness is not, by default, treated as relative weakness. It is relatively positioned to White identity as a deviation, but it's power components are framed much like Machiavelli's (1981) centaur, with White power structures marking themselves the larger more covert power while framing Blackness as the overt and presumably more aggressive power in need of taming. These associations have historically allowed for the maintenance of White supremacy over all races in the U.S. as well as the criminalization of Black bodies, legitimizing their oppression. This oppression is rooted in the trope of Blackness as vio-

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[12] To "son" someone is to demean or place yourself in a to position as their superior (i.e. to make them feel like a son or child).

lent by nature, yet places them in a position of powerlessness within the power based system. A full discussion of the complexity of these particular norms is beyond the scope of this project, yet worth acknowledging.

Transcript 4.15 "Whiteness as standard" (Barry O.- SWM)

In the below clip, Dan and Barry O. acknowledge the hegemonic force of Whiteness as the neutral standard and the role this "norm" plays in the historical definition and construction of race (notably Blackness) as a (relative) deviation from said "norm."

Exchange #6	**@22 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
877	Barry O.	Everything is stolen @@	
878		Right so I dunno	
879		Yeah that's a good question	
880	Dan	Cause I know there's this class where we're taught by George Yancey	
881		And it's called like the politics of White identity	
882	Barry O.	Sure sure	
883	Dan	Or like Black identity or something	
884		And then it's just like	
885		Like studying like a White person's identity	
886		Or like how they come to realize that they are White?	
887		And it's just only expressed in terms of like	
888		The opposite of like being Black or the opposite of like	
889		The colonial structures of the-	
890	Barry O.	Yeah yeah yeah	

Exchange #6	**@22 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
891		That's right	
892		I am- but like yeah I was	
893		Actually b- so my whole like	
894		White baseline or White neutral neutrality	
895		Theory came from Daniel la chance	
896	Dan	Mhm	
897	Barry O.	And it was just a th-	
898		It wasn't even a wasn't even any race specific class	
899		It was a class on popular culture and politics	
900	Dan	Yeah	
901	Barry O.	We were just going through like periods in	
902		American popular culture	
903		And for a while that was a trope in American popular culture	
904		Was like Whiteness as like the standard	
905		And so there was no	
906		There was no distinguish-	
907		There was no distinguishing language for ____	
908		It was just people	

In this first clip, Barry O. (SWM) remarks on what it means to be White in America, asserting that American culture is stolen and pieced together from numerous other cultures. Dan agrees with him and as he discusses his thoughts on the topic which are

supported by Barry O. with minimal responses such as "yeah" and "sure." What makes this interaction unique is that Barry's minimal responses are quite aggressive in volume and quantity making him the focus of the conversation even when he doesn't have the floor. Though Barry O. takes the floor and a position of *Authority*, he critiques the very power from which he is drawing (as a Straight White Male)as he challenges the history of Whiteness as Standard. In addition to his conversational dominance, his decision to take on the pseudonym Barry O. (a reference to then President Barack Obama) is indexical of a desire to draw from the most powerful person in the country, situating him as the power element in the conversation. Thus, despite his critiques of hegemonic Whiteness, he is quick to draw from it during his interactions. Dan is tasked with negotiating Whiteness as hegemonic as well as fragile along with myths of Black aggression.

Transcript 4.16 "Acting your race" (Marc- BiWM)

In next interaction, Dan is once again conversing with Marc (BiWM) about race and cultural stereotypes. As Marc attempts to explain his position, several maneuvers occur as Dan's disagreement with Marc's views potentially challenge their positive horizontal stance and a decision must be made to assert or mitigate power as the racial *Authority*. At this point in the conversation with Marc (BiWM), race is still the primary topic of focus. Just before this Transcript, Dan had asked Marc about the performativity of identity, and particularly that of race, which Marc hesitantly contests, citing the logical requirement of having to honor stereotypes if one believed that you could "act" your race. It is unclear whether or not Dan fully disagrees or simply wants a more developed answer. In this interaction, Dan attempts to negotiate both the question of race as an identity factor

as well as his apparent disagreement with Marc's statement. As he negotiates these difficult positions, his speech reflects the complexity of his positioning and how he moves around the difficult situation in a diplomatic manner. This Transcript highlights Dan's negotiation of race as well as how Marc negotiates his own racial identity and the power/privilege that comes with Whiteness.

Exchange #2	**@12 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
345	Dan	so in your opinion	
346		uh do you think that other races can act certain ways	
347		like other people can act Black or act hispanic	
348		or things of that nature	
349	Marc	Do I think they can?	
350	Dan	mhm	
351	Marc	um. well th- that would (.) t- to think that	Pause
352		I would have to (.) um honor stereotypes about race	Pause, hedge
353	Dan	mhm	
354	Marc	which I- you know	Hedge, hesitation
355		do my best to not um (.)	Pause
356		so () hm does that answer the question	
357	Dan	mm	
358		sure I- yeah I think it does	
359		so like even in the context of like	Like

Exchange #2	**@12 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
360		identity affirmation and doing certain cultural	
361		uh events or traditions	
362		is that like not acting a certain race to you	Like
363		or acting a certain	
364		I dunno identity category	Dunno
365	Marc	um (.) wait I dunno say it again	Dunno
366	Dan	so when people embrace certain cultural traditions	
367	Marc	yeah	
368	Dan	are those forms of affirming their own racial identity	
369	Marc	um	
370		it can be I guess	Hedge: I guess
371	Dan	mhm	
372	Marc	um (.) yeah so (.)	
373		I gue- so	self-correct./ hedge
374	Dan	mhm	
375	Marc	I don't know if I have anything else to say	
376		about -about like the cultural	self-correct./ hedge
377		expression	

Interestingly enough, in this same moment, Marc is yielding his own power by silencing himself as Dan speaks and by using markers such as minimal responses which

facilitate cooperative speech. In an earlier interaction and throughout the conversation, Marc explicitly expresses trepidation at discussing assumptions about Black prescriptions of masculinity as a non-member of an ethnic minority community. He expresses what he has observed but makes a significant effort to avoid over-stepping his bounds or coming off as offensive. In using powerless language, he distances himself from the content enough to be accountable for his words, yet not penalized for anything he may say that could be read as an offense. What should be considered is the very real possibility that Dan, as the facilitator, is negotiating around Marc's race as a White person, making a significant effort at mitigating his statements to not come off as accusatory (as a *Challenger* would) or even potentially threatening to a White Male as he discusses issues of race and privilege. This is a tactic that is often used/discussed by Black men in this study as well as others I have conducted: the idea of managing what has been referred to as "White fragility" when having conversations about experiences of power and privilege as almost necessary to avoid a visceral "I'm not racist" reaction, which frequently occurs. Additionally, for Black men, taking into account the assumption of them as an aggressive threat that is always a potential danger, a speaker may take extra precaution not to "scare the White people" with anything that might possibly be considered aggressive speech. In a previous study which examined the mitigation of Black masculinity (Cornelius 2016), the interviewee (a Straight Black Male) expressly described the processes he regularly takes to present himself as a non-threat to White people and how he uses powerless speech to do so. In this Transcript, Dan seems to be taking similar precautions due to his excessive power yielding despite both his role as the *Interviewer* as well as his expertise

as the *Authority* on his own experiences with race. We cannot be sure of his true motivations, but we can be sure that he is negotiating around power as it is constantly surfacing in interactions as aggression, conversational control, and positioning, and taking great pains to do so via speech. In this interaction, Dan draws on the persona of *Authority* as a result of his experiential expertise of Black cultural membership when placed next to his White counterpart. This topic of familiarity automatically places him above Marc in terms of vertical positioning and Marc's seeming need to give an explanation for his comments on the performativity of race furthers this imbalance between them. Dan's decision to stick to the questions as I wrote them instead of making the discussion personal (leading to a potential conflict) kept the stance neutral and the interaction remained a simple imbalance. This neutral stance, while keeping conflict at bay, also blurs the lines between *Interviewer* and *Authority* as, despite the written questions, the topic could have become personal and did in an indirect manner as evidenced by Dan's upper hand concerning race.

Transcript 4.17 "Irrational fear of Blackness" (Mary Jane- BiWF)

Exchange #4	**@43 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1935	Dan	And I think like it was jus kinda like this irrational fear	Kinda, jus, like
1936		Of like *Blackness*	
1937		And like what it means for other people	
1938		Cause I guess like in the context of like slavery	

Exchange #4	**@43 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1939		Like the United States was	
1940		Literally built off the backs of slaves	
1941		And it's jus like	
1942		Kind of hard to like erase that moment from history?	Final rising inton.
1943	Mary Jane	Mhm	
1944	Dan	Like that you can't erase that moment from history?	Final rising inton.
1945	Mary Jane	Yeah	
1946	Dan	And jus acting like	Jus, no nasal fronting
1947		"Oh yeah like everything was fixed like as soon as slavery ended"	
1948		But like even then	
1949		Like the moment after slavery ended	
1950		Like if you've read like this book called *Beloved*	
1951		Which is like really good?	Final rising inton.
1952		It was about like this family	
1953		Like by Toni Morrison	
1954		It was about this family like right after slavery ended	
1955		And jus like the things that they went through?	Jus, final rising inton.
1956		And it was like pretty clear that	

Exchange #4	**@43 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1957		The effects of slavery were-not-over	
1958		And like they were still in fact	
1959		Slaves in some regards	
1960		In like like the family relationships that they had	
1961		They were like ruined because of slavery	
1962		It's just like	
1963		That same cycle	
1964		It didn't like	
1965		Stop there	
1966	Mary Jane	Yeah	
1967	Dan	It jus like continued throughout time	jus
1968		And it's jus like we're here right now	jus
1969		And they're still like	copula presence
1970		This irrational fear of Blackness	
1971		Like this nonsense-	
1972		Nonsensical like (.) um	Hedge
1973		like feeling toward Black people	
1974	Mary Jane	Yeah	
1975	Dan	And it jus like	Jus
1976		It doesn't make any sense	
1977		Just like the associations that have been like	Just (t release)
1978		created because of our skin	

Exchange #4	**@43 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1979		Like because of this event	
1980		That happened a while ago	
1981	Mary Jane	Mhm	
1982	Dan	Or like	
1983		A while ago for some people to be like	
1984		“Oh ya’ll should be over that by now”	
1985		When in fact like it has tautological effects	
1986		Like over time and like	
1987		How people feel right now and I—	

Again, Dan is faced with the assignment of negotiating around White fragility (DiAngelo 2018) and what he terms an "irrational fear of Blackness.” As he is answering questions about his racial identity and experience as a Black Male with a White woman, he takes on the persona of *Interviewee*, posturing himself as a non-threatening entity. This move is doubly necessary as he is also presenting a narrative about race which could lead to a negative stance for a White person. His take on the Black experience could easily have been met with protest and Dan’s posturing seems to prepare for that. As a result, he presents hesitant speech appearing to avoid seeming too aggressive as he talks about the irrational fear of an imagined Black aggression with a White woman. Over time as he mentions hot button words that could provoke the “I’m not racist” reaction, he mitigates them with concurrent hedges (Line 1972) or final rising intonation (Line 1955).

As Dan explores this potentially volatile topic with Mary Jane, he treads softly, avoiding drawing too much on personal experience and maintaining a neutral stance and equal verticality with Mary Jane. It should be noted that neutrality is a tactic commonly drawn on to navigate White fragility (and the narrative of White as always under threat from Blackness) as appearing too "biased" or "emotional" can lead to gaslighting[13] by one's interlocutor. This discursive move is not limited to race as it must be navigated by women as well as LGBTQ+ speakers when discussing topics marked sensitive with out-group members. That said, the neutral stance paired with the burden of responding to Mary Jane's inquiry places Dan in the lowered vertical position associated with the *In-terviewee*. Given the dynamics at play, this may have been seen as the most likely option, chosen by Dan to mitigate any threat of being seen as the "angry/aggressive Black man" as he discusses this very irrational fear and invokes the history of Blackness as a hyper-aggressive threat.

Transcript 4.18 "It's not about me!" (Jabari- GBM)

Exchange #1	**@49 min.**		
Line	**Speaker**		**Feature**
1632	Dan	It's not about me	call-out
1633		Issa about /chu/	/chu/
1634	Jabari	=whatchu mean its about me	Overlapping speech
1635	Dan	=well If you want me to uh answer some questions you know	Overlapping speech
1636	Jabari	Naw just	

[13] I use the term "gaslight" to refer to the treatment of a vulnerable person (or community's) emotions as irrational, calling into question their sense of reality.

Exchange #1 @49 min.

Line	Speaker		Feature
1637	Dan	just go ahead	/go ahead/
1638		just go on and ask the juicy ones okay	go on
1639		don't be like that	
1640		Take take off the sunglasses	direct order
1641	Jabari	no. sorry	
1642	Dan	alright it's dark as hell out	dark as hell
1643		What are you doing	
1644	Jabari	there's light in here	
1645	Dan	here here	
1646		you're not gonna like	
1647		just ask the most juicy one you	
1648		you really like need an answer to	
1649	Jabari	I don't need an answer to any of them	
1650		I think you're a cool person	
1651		I mean from the questions that	
1652		I mean from how I've evaluated you since we've been here	AAL-light shade
1653	Dan	Mhm	
1654	Jabari	I don't think you're uppity or stuck up	
1655	Dan	oh @@	
1656	Jabari	and if I saw you in the street I would speak	
1657	Dan	hm	

In this final Transcript, I analyze Dan's negotiation of his Blackness with another Black person. Race negotiation is not solely about dealing with the "other." It can also involve proving oneself and negotiating the narrative of insufficient Blackness that could surface among group members, an issue that will be further explored in the next chapter. The negative stance between Dan and Jabari is evident from Dan's dissenting comment "It's not about me!" as he passes the onus of conversation to Jabari (Line 1633). The attitude that Dan takes provides ample space for conflict between the two, yet the two take on a much more congenial approach as Dan quickly concedes, telling Jabari to ask the "most juicy" question as a type of recompense (Line 1638). This allowance would imply an acknowledgment that Dan may not have communicated as much as Jabari. In his defense, Jabari takes on the injured "never mind" persona, putting on his shades and feigning offense. At this point, Dan is attempting to cajole Bakari into asking him questions with the positioning and power dynamics flipped. The interaction concludes with the two of them presenting plenty of attitude and throwing shade (Line 1652) as they tease one another. In other interactions, Dan had disagreed with Jabari, but in this particular case, his comfort with challenging him has grown (perhaps due to familiarity) and there is much more of an equal footing as the two go back and forth and engage in verbal play. This Transcript illustrates the comfort established between Dan and Jabari, as evidenced by Dan's self-expression. The indexicality of his in-group membership within the Black community also comes to the forefront as verbal play between the two develops serving as an indicator of a relationship of solidarity, beyond the surface of negotiations. This piece is a response to Jabari's new endeavor, an attempt to get Dan to participate more

actively in the conversation. Jabari, in his own way, actively encourages Dan to speak up more and show himself in the interview, which points to, once again, either a shift in their relationship or unwitting aggression from Jabari who clearly does not wish to dominate the conversation and silence Dan but instead spars/interacts with him. This is when the banter that was seemingly aggressive shifts into a more playful, solidarity building interaction. Just as the dozens and shade throwing, are AAL and GMS activities played between friends, and often intended with little malice, the interaction between Dan and Jabari, though not completely devoid of tension or potential conflict is indexical of a more personal and friendly relationship. It could be argued then that this seeming disagreement has induced an unspoken consensus between Dan and Jabari and what started out as the *Challenger* persona has evolved into that of a *Comrade* as the relationship has become more congenial, though no less power driven.

In addition to negotiating around power norms to establish our identities, power may also be used as a tool to facilitate solidarity based on cultural treatments of power. This is evidenced in the above discussion of AAL and in addition to several research projects centered around power-driven interactions between men that result in solidarity, from sports to insults among fraternity members (Kiesling 1996). It is not unheard of for marginalized groups to negotiate with things they have been deprived of and in this light, power negotiations among African-Americans- a group of people who have been historically stripped of power (especially the men), to play with power amongst themselves in an intra-cultural setting for a number of reasons (Smitherman 1998). The speech events: Reading, Toasting, Call-Outs, and Shade-throwing point to a cultural requisite to estab-

lish one's place within the community and social groups in an almost ritualistic way. These acts are not just to play or entertain but could very well be seen as a means of orienting oneself and a vital practice in the negotiation and performance of Blackness. That being said, what is seemingly a power issue on the surface, may actually be a means to an end resulting in a type of solidarity amongst speakers, should one successfully establish that they can "hang," "stomp with the big dogs," or "hold their own" when it comes to power and Blackness, which Dan did during negotiations.

So far, I have addressed all the personae exclusively as if they exist apart from one another. But this case points to the very murky waters of power and identity as they converge. Although, this interaction begins with a challenge and undoubted conflict, it is not unheard of for conflict to serve as a pathway towards solidarity. The power dynamics at play here both challenge and reproduce the association of Blackness and specifically Black masculinity with power, drawing on the power associations but neutralizing the historical trope of Blackness as aggressive and in need of controlling. There is no reckless use of power in this case, and the power that does exist is a means of achieving connection between Dan and Jabari, an approach which challenges the overall belief that power is solely about positioning and divisiveness.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Power is embedded in the very groups from which we draw our identities and their corresponding linguistic resources. With this in mind, if power in any way motivates our use of negotiation to position ourselves, and if we are using language to enact said negotiations, then it would stand to reason that power norms grossly inform intraspeaker

variation. Be it code-switching, diglossia, or the use of the linguistic repertoire, the motivation for our linguistic adaptation is not solely our interlocutors or audience, it is also the power that is embedded in their identities, and our own, which are brought into a conversation.

As Dan uses power based linguistic features, he influences moments of talk leading to the creation of at least six personae. These personae manifested via power-based language go on to yield, or better, reflect Dan's positioning towards his interlocutors (i.e. stance and verticality) indexing either power or solidarity with his fellow speakers. Dan manages to negotiate power in a number of situations with a number of speakers via the use of power based linguistic features as indicative of the personae upon which he draws to carry out said negotiations. These personae are a means by which Dan effectively positions himself with respect to his interlocutors, drawing on power as it relates to different identity facets that help compose Dan's repertoire of identity. Further, the features he employs are reflective of his linguistic repertoire with the respective elements, like the personae, functioning as parts of a sum. These two repertoires in turn serve as mirrors of one another. In this way, Dan's use of power-based language can be treated as a reflection of how he negotiates his identity, bringing to the fore one of the ways in which language and identity interface: as mirrors of one another. We now have an idea of what elements help compose repertoires but have yet to explore how these elements fit and function within their respective spaces inside the repertoires. As a mirror, the same would ring true for Dan's linguistic resources. While I will continue to use linguistic labels as reference points when addressing variables associated with linguistic varieties and identity groups,

I will expand my discussion beyond them in an attempt to explore how a single speaker may use more than one variety or even use features that blur the lines between linguistic categories making it difficult to link to one specific variety. By moving beyond the limits of these labels, I hope to observe linguistic features as they interact with one another and in the context of the speaker's actions to better understand to which variety they may belong at any given discursive turn. The limitations of these linguistic labels expand into the limitations of how we understand intraspeaker variation and cognitive representations of language just as they fail to take into account multiple and potentially overlapping or conflicting identity memberships. The next chapter will explore these phenomena and the nature of a multiplex repertoire for both identity and language beyond these essentialized boundaries.

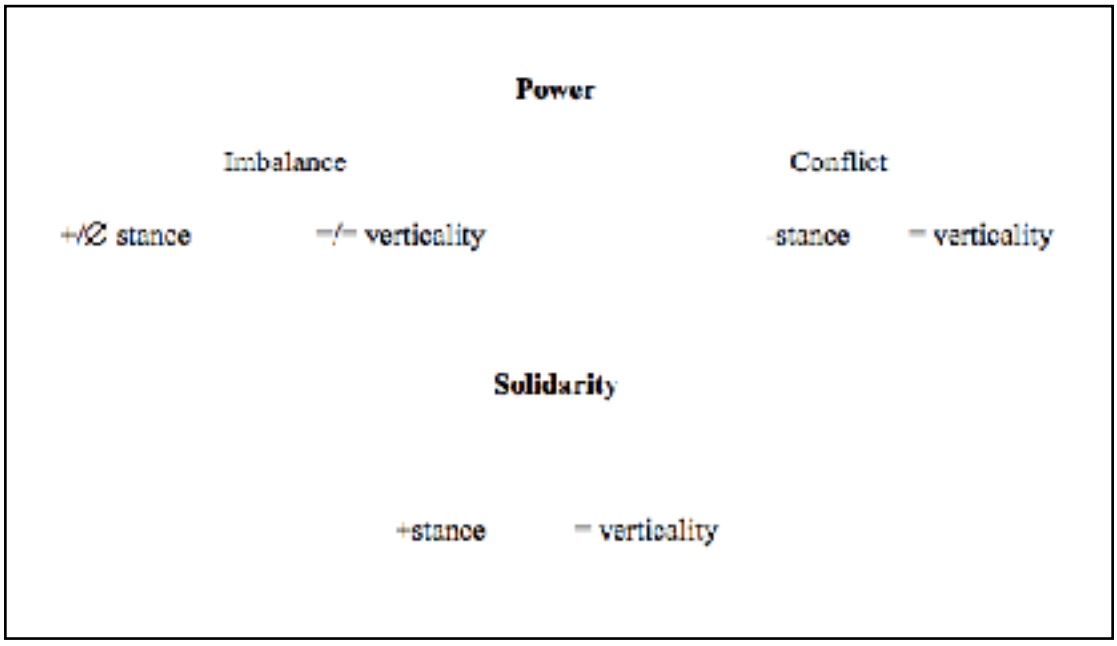

Figure 4.1 Power/Solidarity frame

Table 4.1 Power/Personae chart

Persona	Stance	Verticality	Conversation Initiator	Conversational Burden	Power result
Interviewer	∅	=/=	✓		Imbalance
Interviewee	∅	=/=		✓	Imbalance
Challenger	-	=	✓		Conflict
Defender	-	=		✓	Conflict
Authority	+	=/=		✓	Imbalance
Comrade	+	=	=	=	Solidarity

CHAPTER 5

"I DON'T BE WITH THE BOYS": DEFENDING MULTIPLE IDENTITY MEMBERSHIPS VIA STANCE AND INDEXICALITY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter explored the role of power in the negotiation of identity via linguistic features that have been historically and culturally imbued with influence. These negotiations served as useful tools for Dan to position himself with interlocutors based on the power both he and they carried into the conversational arena by way of their identities. Power, however, is not the sole aspect of identity. With power as a historical reference, through distinction and othering, concepts such as "Whiteness" are developed as identity collectives (in this case, race-based) where members draw the benefits and means of ultimately constructing said identity via performance. This chapter will explore said collectives as group memberships and the ways in which they are maintained. The goal of Dan's negotiations centered on positioning and, in the best-case scenarios, led to solidarity with his interlocutors. Solidarity is essential to identity groups as constructs which, being social by nature, depend on relational proximity as well as corporate agreement and acceptance of what constitutes membership and its subsequent byproducts.

Like Chapter 4, this chapter will examine the ways in which Dan constructs his identity socially via orientation, particularly that of stance. The focus of this chapter will remain on Dan's self-positioning but will branch out towards the specific ways in which

he orients himself in terms of identity groups instead of in relation to individuals. Unlike the previous chapter, power will no longer be at the forefront of my examination. While power still plays a role in his identity construction, the focus of this chapter is centered around the ways in which Dan manages intra-group orientation (e.g., how he orients himself to those with whom he shares memberships). As identity-based power differentials often surface between out-group members who share opposing identity memberships, a focus on in-group memberships will hopefully minimize this dynamic (as will be observed later in the chapter). The fact that power is still present, while not the focus, is demonstrative of the complexity of identity construction as it involves a number of dynamics which are simultaneously managed by linguistic individuals. As power and vertical positioning take a backseat in this chapter, the personae framework will be left behind, as a new process (that of maintenance) requires a new approach which takes into account stance primarily, focusing on in-group proximity instead of out-group power dynamics.

There has been much discussion about the label for the identity groups, particularly with regard to their linguistic aspect (Knott 1934; Gumperz 1964; Hymes 1972; Silverstein 1987; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998; Bucholtz 1999; Fordham 1999; Pullum 1999; Smitherman 2006). Leonard Bloomfield (1933) defined the *speech community* as "a group of people who interact by means of speech." This working definition, while seminal, drew criticism as it focused largely on monolingualism. For example, William Labov's (1972) contribution to the use of the term *speech community* brought to the fore shared norms beyond the homogeneity of speech. Marcyliena Morgan's (2014) thorough

discussion of the term's history provides a broad, generalized definition as "groups that share values and attitudes about language use, varieties and practices." Based on this definition, at least two things must be shared: community membership and linguistic resources, but Morgan is one of the few scholars who highlights the role of interaction and community membership in the construction of identity as well as linguistic ideologies instead of solely an ideal site to examine language use.

John Gumperz (1968, 1972) defined the speech community as "any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage." Gumperz's définition also highlights the interactive nature of speech communities as socially constructed giving way to social norms as resources. The language of his definition also marked the critical impact of distinction (which I explore below). Dell Hymes (1974) drew on and contributed to Gumperz's definition by addressing the required competence beyond strict linguistic form to include: social mores, acceptability, attitudes, and values, yielding what he collectively referred to as "communicative competence" and pointing to the critical role of authenticity. This acquisition of said competence was considered as a means of performing adequate behavior and demonstrating membership via participation and socialization.

Needless to say, there are as many interpretations of the concept as there are theorists. The goal of this chapter is not to argue over the specifics of what constitutes a speech community. I am simply interested in speech communities as sources of identity for speakers and the ways in which memberships in these groups are held, how said

memberships are maintained, and exhibited as a means of indexing thus constructing one's identity. With this in mind, I draw heavily on Gumperz's and Hymes' respective definitions in my use of the term "speech community" but would like to expand the role of identity and focus on speech as a means of indexing in-group membership (Eckert 2012).

Additionally, this chapter seeks to further expand the treatment of speech communities to include multiplicity. Failure to deal with intra-group complexity is limiting and reminiscent of the criticism of early definitions of speech communities in terms of monolingualism (see Gumperz 1972 and Hymes 1974). It is possible to exist within a community that shares identity categories of which membership is required but not bounded, allowing for variation within the community. This is not only logical, but likely as most social actors have more than one aspect of their identity meaning they probably hold membership in more than one identity-based speech community. Having multiple identities is not unheard of and has been addressed from numerous approaches, notably via Intersectional identity theory (Crenshaw 1989; Collins 1991). W.E.B. DuBois' (1903) seminal work on double consciousness highlighted the complications of existing within more than one community and the conflicts to be navigated within both. That said, not only can a speaker exist within more than one community, they may in fact, also exist within communities that exhibit dissonance vis-à-vis one another based on socio-historical positioning.

In the case of racial and sexual identities, Julius Johnson (1982) tackled the notion of forced allegiances and prioritization with the examination of the "Gay Black vs. Black

Gay" question (See Chapter 2). Lisa Bowleg (2013) also examined this particular conflict, ultimately arguing that "identities are not independent and additive, but multiple, interlocking and mutually constitutive." The endeavor of this chapter is rooted in the examination of this very phenomenon begging the question, "How are multiple and potentially conflicting memberships maintained via intraspeaker variation?" Cornelius and Barrett (2019) approach the question of competing allegiances for speakers with multiplex identities as they examine the animosity fueled by Black heterosexism and Gay racism for a Gay Black Male. Their work highlights the ways in which a given speaker draws on at least three of his identities (Gay, Black, and Male) separately and together as a way of mitigating the threats these identities could potentially pose to one another.

As is evident from the term "speech community," one of the most significant means of doing identity which is sourced from membership would be linguistic, in this case language varieties associated with the identity group. While much of the research on language and gender centered on language as reflective of status or even in reaction to power, Cameron's (1997) work on language and masculinity tackles its use as not just a means of performing masculinity but also of establishing membership within one's identity group. Though this is not her primary focus, she does not ignore the fact that, where masculinity is constantly scrutinized and questioned, any deviation from prescribed norms could be deemed a threat and, as such, could be interpreted as grounds for exclusion from the group.

Once a speaker enters a community, they are exposed to countless means of exhibiting membership and thus constructing particular identities. Be it from birth as socially

gendered beings or through finding a safe space for Queer people of color, we are actively and passively taught that, “this is how you behave as a girl, boy, African-American, etc.” Speakers may learn these behaviors from observation as well as explicit directives. But they are actively taught how to socially perform their identities for better or worse. As speakers are taught these things, they are given resources, tools through which they might execute these enactments. “This is what little girls wear”, “Boys don’t cry”, “Here’s what to say, not say, etc.” These tools then become directly associated with the group memberships and can be used to demonstrate inclusion as well as showcase one’s affiliations. In this case, said tool would be language, more specifically linguistic varieties associated with speech communities.

Though I have employed the labels WL, GMS, and AAL and have referred to linguistic features attributed to them, the limitations of such labels can be quite confining, particularly when they are employed by those who find membership in intersecting, or better overlapping, identity groups. While I continue to use these labels as a reference point when addressing variables that are potentially associated with particular varieties and identity groups, I expand my discussion beyond them in an attempt to explore how a single speaker may use more than one variety or even use features that blur the lines between linguistic categories making it difficult to link to one specific variety. The limitations of these labels expand into the limitations of how we understand intraspeaker variation and cognitive representations of language. By moving beyond these limits, I hope to be able to observe linguistic features in interaction with one another and in the context of the speaker’s actions to better understand to which variety(ies) they may belong at any

given discursive turn. Because of these and other limitations of viewing intraspeaker variation as a distinct switching between varieties, in addition to the presented shortcomings in the use of linguistic labels themselves, I would like to adopt the approaches of Gumperz and Benor by employing the “repertoire” approach to my analysis of how a single speaker uses language to negotiate and perform his identity, expanding the label to include not only ethnicity but also gender and sexuality.

In this chapter I also examine identity categories as they transcend the labels with which they have been associated. As is the case with linguistic labels, I will continue to use identity terms as reference points. While I have opted to use the term "speech community” I will not adopt the full framework as it relates to labels. As one of the overarching goals of this chapter and the dissertation is to demonstrate the inefficacy of labels and their inadequacies in capturing the intricacies and nuance of identity and identity based intraspeaker variation.

In this chapter, “maintenance” will be defined as the routine upkeep of membership within a community through the exhibition of solidarity via stance. As social actors, speakers draw their identities from the social groups within which they hold membership in a manner that is interactive, collecting the resources with which they may enact and recreate these identities. The most obvious reasoning for group maintenance is simple upkeep with the goal of remaining within group and the attainment of social acceptance. Another reason for maintaining membership within an identity group is, similar to any other group membership, the reaping of in-group resources and privileges. Certain acts, behaviors, presentations, and speech patterns index (i.e. point to) identity groups as their

source, demonstrating an association and thus enacting (or embodying) that group membership. Yes, possessing the essential identity and being born into the group is critical to membership, but the crux of the desire vs. identity debate (Darsey 1981; Hayes 1981; Leap 1996; Kulick 2000) in the field of language and sexuality was about the transition from just possessing the sexual desire to establishing membership within the collective community and living "out" the identity in one's own way.

Another motivation to maintain one's community membership would be the requisite to protect it. Threats against an identity group may mandate the need for solidarity for the sake of preservation. This solidarity may in turn be indexed and established via identity maintenance. In Chapter 4, speakers negotiated around one another with the goal of establishing who is who during interaction. Part of this positioning involves understanding whether or not a stranger one encounters could be a potential threat by sheer lack of familiarity. In Black culture, authenticity is paramount to legitimacy and is synonymous with being "down" (i.e., an adjective, a "word of approval… especially referring to a person's character" as described by Clarence Major (1970, 148). Major goes on to define "down with" as "the ability to empathize" with possible origins reaching as far back as the 1930s. Geneva Smitherman (1994, 99) defines "down" similarly, drawing heavily on agreeability to participate in an activity. More specifically, she explores the phrases "down for" and "down with" in terms of loyalty and group membership support. There is a consistent thread in these definitions that links legitimacy (i.e down-ness) with community membership as being rooted in support or allegiance and ultimately safety. This is not shocking when considering the plight of Black Americans, given their historical need

for protection and defense against the threat of oppressive power systems. It is worth considering then that the demand for legitimacy within the Black community may be more about knowing who can and cannot be trusted to "ride" (i.e., to have someone's back or be supportive) when the community is under threat, making sense of the claim that "all skinfolk ain't kinfolk" which emphasizes the rejection of a solely essentialized identity based on skin color vs. actively constructed Blackness and community membership. In any case, the above examples point to some type of threat as a catalyst which demands solidarity as a means of demonstrating and maintaining group membership. It is the need to preserve, the impending threat against groups, which can often inform and yield the creation of labels which may not have otherwise been necessary. There was a historical necessity for what we now know as LGBTQ+ speakers to hide who they are for the sake of safety, let alone cultural acceptance and, while we have come a long way, speakers (closeted or not) still may feel the need to protect themselves from a society which is hostile towards them at best. It is an act of bravery and resistance to "stand in one's truth," so the need for a covert means of seeking out community would be essential

Resources gained from one's speech community are a means of demonstrating and indexing a legitimate membership within the community like any other badge or symbol of recognition, such as a "Black card," which is a term used to refer to theoretical membership within the Black community, especially for non-African-Americans who prove to be sufficiently "Black." However, indexing membership linguistically requires more than just using the features. Anyone can hear a word or two and attempt to use them to fabricate an identity. Coincidentally, this is often what transpires with those who attempt to

discredit non-standard varieties such as AAL, but use the linguistic features out of context, resulting in embarrassment and the revelation of their inauthenticity. Working knowledge and adequate communicative competence (Hymes 1972) of a linguistic variety associated with the speech community is critical to indexing sanctioned membership. For these and other previously mentioned reasons, I shift my focus away from individual linguistic features and the power with which they are associated and move towards linguistic varieties bearing their labels and constructed for the sake of survival.

The goal of this chapter is to investigate the ways in which a speaker with multiple identity group memberships, some of which could potentially be in conflict, manages to maintain them all (navigating dissonance among them) through the use of a linguistic repertoire composed of multiple corresponding language varieties. This chapter examines the role of competitive and conflicting allegiances as a motivating factor for intraspeaker variation by Dan. As a member of multiple identity groups, Dan has access to multiple linguistic resources with which he may index identity. Likewise, there are also multiple power dynamics which come along with those memberships (and resources) which must be managed for the sake of a cohesive multiplex identity. I attempt to examine both of these by shifting focus towards the ways in which Dan uses language to create and sustain proximity with in-group members through collectively agreed upon resources of authentication (notably group related language varieties). I explore Dan's use of the varieties at his disposal to manage these potential conflicts treating them as a mirror which will hopefully reflect his stance-taking processes.

Additionally, this chapter will examine the ways in which multiple elements (linguistic varieties and identity group memberships) within a single repertoire manage to coexist. In the previous chapter, Dan's use of language was indicative of this process of positioning both in proximity (stance) and height (verticality) and created power-based personae from which he drew in order to enact power negotiations. While both the linguistic features and power-based personae have shed light on the elements which help compose theoretical linguistic and identity repertoires, they do not (by themselves) help clarify how these repertoires are composed. We have yet to fully understand how separate elements such as identity memberships function together within a single unit. Singular features only serve as mirrors of how identity is negotiated and do not account for its maintenance or multiplicity. This chapter moves beyond the scope of isolated features towards language varieties as sourced from identity group memberships and employed as a means of indexing and reinforcing said memberships. Drawing on the work of Goffman and Dubois, I continue to work within the framework of stance as the means by which Dan demonstrates his allegiance.

5.2 REPRODUCING/CHALLENGING IDENTITY GROUPS VIA STANCE, INDEXICALITY, AND DISTINCTION

According to John DuBois (2007), the stance which is taken by a speaker signals their positioning as a social actor and is rooted in the evaluation of an object or other interlocutors. This evaluation of said object leads to the positioning of one's self in terms of other speakers. While one evaluates an object according to Du Bois, a speaker aligns (or disaligns) with another speaker in much the same way. These evaluations and alignments

effectively establish the process of positioning for speakers. This relationship leads to alignment as either converging (solidarity) or diverging (animosity). Drawing on Chapter 4's definition of stance as the horizontal relationship between speakers, which can be positive, negative or neutral, I examine the ways in which Dan's identity group memberships are maintained via this process of alignment (leading to solidarity or animosity) as indexed by his use of language varieties associated with identity groups. Goffman's discussion of footing provides a framework for addressing participation in contextually specific instances of language use and the roles that interlocutors take up in conversation. Du Bois' inclusion of the invocation of cultural systems also makes his framework applicable for this project as Dan's stances express his self-positioning and project his experience of cultural and societal definitions and evaluations of masculinity and race.

My approach is built upon the analytic tools provided by Du Bois (1997), Goffman (1981), and Bakhtin (1981,1986). While these are the major theories upon which I ground my analysis, it must be noted that the use of indexicality (Peirce 1932) in the evaluations and stances taken in discussion is critical to the positioning of the self as a method of identity construction. According to Peirce, a sign can take on three functions: icon, symbol, or index. In short, an icon possesses the likeness of its referent, much like the trash bin icon on a computer's desktop. By contrast, a symbol looks nothing like its referent but gains its meaning via association. Finally, an index is an element which leads to the association with its referent via a natural pathway of thought – the typical example being smoke and fire. While smoke looks nothing like fire, fire is often accompanied by smoke. Thus, it is logical to assume that where there is smoke, there may be fire. This is not al-

ways the case, but it is so frequent that the sensing of smoke, literally alerts one of a fire. Smoke, then serves as indexical of (i.e pointing to) fire.

I take on this framework of indexicality when examining the use of resources as indexical of speech community membership. An indexical involves three major elements: the sign, an object (what the sign represents) and the result of the interpretation. In this case, those would be the linguistic variety employed, the stance/alignment that said speech represents, and the resulting alignment (solidarity/animosity) respectively.

Further, I incorporate Michael Silverstein's (2003) orders of indexicality framework as indexicals are socially constructed deriving their meaning from previous associations. The stance demonstrated as alignment depends on association with the groups which have been created as a byproduct of historical power dynamics. Membership within the groups is indexed via resources which are sourced from said memberships, drawing their indexical power on past norms and reproducing those same realities as they are employed.

As speakers use linguistic and behavioral markers, they are drawing from resources gained through group membership and, in turn, indexing (Eckert 2012) their allegiance with the group. This allegiance surfaces as stance, the horizontal proximity to or alignment with a speech community. The use of group resources is indicative of a positive alignment with said group which is how that particular identity is maintained. This stance positions Dan in proximity to his interlocutors and can result in solidarity or conflict with them. The same applies for group memberships. Based on his alignment, Dan can either

index himself as in-group or out-group, in solidarity or otherness with a speech community and its members.

If for instance, a speaker employs a linguistic feature which could be attributed to both AAL and GMS (e.g., "shade" as a reference to the practice of indirect insult), it would be fair to say that there may be two options for indexicality which would be dictated based on surrounding information. Similarly, the use of powerful speech could be used to index masculinity or Blackness and AAWL may be used to index both Blackness and Female identity or either separately. By approaching repertoires of language and identity as holistic elements affected by surrounding factors, I hope to expand Peirce and Silverstein's treatment of indexicality to account for multiple possible indexical meanings and how they surface differently based on environment. In this way, we may decipher what a speaker is doing in relation to the category more accurately (if necessary for labels) and we may gain a greater view of how the multiplex identity is indexed and thus performed.

Power based dynamics seeking to marginalize the powerless cannot take place without the devaluing of speakers and the essentialized identities that they hold. Vertical positioning and (de)legitimation lead to social hierarchies and hegemonic forces. To be the hegemony requires the subjugation of others over which one intends to rule. Group identities begin as essentialized entities which are constructed and associated with power by comparison. For example, sex is a biological difference but our understanding of gender finds its roots in a dyadic system of complementarity and power attributed to speakers based on their biological sex. The critical part of this process is comparison. In order to

establish a dyadic system, one must be able to take two or more groups, establish one as the hegemony and the other as "other."

From the Holocaust to the 'hood, the use of ghettos to literally marginalize communities of speakers by placing them into defined physical spaces has been a tactic of oppression. Though designed to erase and devalue the speakers, the physical proximity of speakers goes a long way towards building communities on a physical level. When forced to live together, a type of dependency is formed as speakers unite through shared similarities and hardship. This sense of community can quickly move beyond the physical as speakers begin to lean on one another for a sense of value, encouragement, and survival. As their shared identities come under attack, their sense of unity can become solidified, and that which they share, (in this case, hardship) can become crucially important as a marker of distinction. The role of "threat" seems to be significant in the establishment of identity salience, which might help explain why what we consider "norms" (such as Straightness) aren't viewed as salient. If we move beyond identities such as White as the standard (or neutral), it might be worth considering that as the neutral, a lack of struggle may reinforce its status as there is no need to defend itself by active resistance.

Transcript 5.1 "Everything is stolen" (Barry- SWM)

In the following Transcript, Barry O. remarks on how Whiteness is in essence, nothingness and how to be White is synonymous with being the norm, the neutral by which all else is compared, thus deriving meaning.

Exchange # 6	**@22 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
877		Everthing is stolen @@
878		Right so I dunno
879		Yeah that's a good question
880	Dan	**Cause** I know **there**'s this class where we're taught by George Yancey
881		And it's called **like** the politics of White identity
882	Barry O.	Sure sure
883	Dan	Or like Black identity or something
884		And then it's just **like**
885		**Like** studying **like** a White person's identity
886		Or like how **they** come to realize that **they** are White**?**
887		And it's just only expressed in terms of **like**
888		The opposite of **like** being Black or the opposite of **like**
889		The Colonial structures of the-
890	Barry O.	-Yeah yeah yeah
891		That's right
892		I am- but **like** yeah I was
893		Actually b- so my whole **like**
894		White baseline or White neutral neutrality
895		Theory came from Daniel la Chance
896	Dan	Mhm
897	Barry O.	And it was just a th-
898		It wasn't even a wasn't even any race specific class
899		It was a class on popular culture and politics
900	Dan	Yeah

Exchange # 6	**@22 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
901	Barry O.	We were just going through **like** periods in
902		American popular culture
903		And for a while that was a trope in American popular culture
904		Was like Whiteness as **like** the standard
905		And so there was no
906		There was no distinguish-
907		There was no distinguishing language
908		Mhm
909		For White people
910		It was just people

Dan furthers the notion of Whiteness as a constructed social norm rooted in contrast in the below discussion with Kelsey. He begins the discussion by addressing the idea of Blackness as we know it as being a product of construction beginning with the Middle Passage and established in contrast to Whiteness.

This subjugation is often facilitated by a means of degradation and ultimate erasure. Because of this, processes of oppression often place speakers in a position of **defense**. They become acutely aware of the threat against them and must find a means of preserving their selves and identities at any cost. It is because of efforts at erasure and marginalization that certain speech communities are tasked with a need to solidify who they are through the use of labels assigned both to identity and to speech. Because they have been

stripped of their proverbial names or worse had their identities dictated to them, the use of self-created labels and identity salience almost serve as acts of preservation, as well as protest against systemic oppression, and are thus vital for many speakers.

Race

Transcript 5.2 "Rupture" (Kelsey- BiBF)

The human need for community is uncontested and critical particularly for those who feel marginalized and "othered." To take solace among others of one's unique kind is an invaluable gift and can sometimes be one that is life-saving. The power of isolation can drive one to madness and when one is already stigmatized for existing, without the comfort and reassurance of their value and belonging, results could prove fatal. The same is tragically the case in relation to racial and ethnic groups, particularly when one is located within an environment in which they are the only (or one of very few) of their background. There are countless tales of students/people in all-White settings such as PWI[14] campuses who, only when they are placed in such settings, begin to seek out community groups as they feel their identities being threatened. In places where they predominate (even if these spaces are within the larger hegemonic culture), this threat against their identity is not as imminent and the requirement for community is not as vital. Thus, in a way, othering can serve to strengthen the marginalized by forcing them to seek out one another.

In the Transcript below, Dan explains to Kelsey the role that being 'othered' played in the construction of Blackness during the middle passage. This discussion holds rele-

[14] PWI=Private White University

vance not just for the past, but for present experiences of Blackness as marked and salient as a result of being labeled an "other" as if a deviation from a neutral.

Exchange # 3	**@5 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
183	Dan	Mhm
184		ºI agree with thatº
185		Ooooh so much
186		it's just like
187		Al- okay cause in Afric-
188		In this African-American =studies class
189	Kelsey	=See look atchu
190		You ∅ lit and woke okay
191	Dan	It's just like
192	Kelsey	Give me
193		Give it to me
194		Yes
195	Dan	Okay so it's u- have you **like**
196		~heard of like Critical race theory~
197		and **like** all that
198		no**?**
199		Okay so **like**
200	Kelsey	See
201		I'm not woke
202	Dan	It just started in the middle passage
203		Um (.)
204		It just kinda like started this like rupture

Exchange # 3	**@5 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
205		And like resignification of like what Blackness means
206		Like in the context of like other people?
207	Kelsey	Mhm
208	Dan	So like when White people
209		See Black bodies
210		Like what exactly
211		What type of affect of like feeling does that create
212	Kelsey	Mhm
213	Dan	And then like
214		It just all kinda started in the middle passage
215		It was like this rupture in time and like
216		And it's **jus-**
217		It's like real complicated but
218		I- **Ion** really like **wanna** go into it
219		All of it now
220		But it's **jus-** like
221		That was like the original side of like why Black people
222		Are like being seen as like other or like
223		Always other-ized in comparisons to like
224		White bodies
225	Kelsey	Mhm
226	Dan	And people who can like
227		ascend to a level of Whiteness
228		That like Black people can't

Exchange # 3	**@5 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
229		Because like
230		Black ness it's marked on the flesh and it's like
231		It's very obvious
232		If you're Black you can't be like
233		"Oh yeah I'm White hahaha''
234	Kelsey	um@
235	Dan	Or pretend like "oh yeah I'm just like yeah"
236		Other wise in
237		Comparison to like
238		If you're Mexican or somethin'
239		And like you're White passing
240		They're like you cannot have that privilege
241		Jus be like
242	Kelsey	Right
243	Dan	"Oh yeah I'm White I"
244		Like
245	Kelsey	Yeah
246	Dan	All that stuff
247		So yeah it's jus-
248		It's just very obvious
249		Like whether or not you're Black
250		so yeah

Despite his positive alignment with Kelsey (who is employing AAL during this interaction) and the Black community, as Dan discusses the historical context through which racial identities as we know them were forged, he consistently draws on MAE (Lines 221-23; 226-30; 235-50). It should be noted that he does draw on a bit of AAL in Lines 216-220. However, one could argue that due to the content of the discussion being in positive alignment with the Black community, there is little need for him to switch varieties. While no one can be sure of his intentions, it is worth mentioning that his ability to articulate a cogent point about race is neither thwarted nor minimized by his use of MAE, bringing up the possibility that perhaps his racial and national identities are not necessarily at odds with one another as the concept of double consciousness (DuBois 1903) would suggest.

Otherness arguably plays a critical role in the salience of marginalized identity as it is taken up by oppressed communities and re-appropriated as a source of identity based on self-distinction. This reappropriation serves as a type of resistance as it is reflective of agency taken on by the marginalized to define themselves, even if by definition designed to oppress them. Such has been the case with the controversial reappropriation of the word "Nigga" which over several generations, has been taken, translated to AAL (as demonstrated by the post-vocalic /r/), imbued with a myriad of coded meanings and regulated by Black speakers who have reserved the right to dictate who may and may not use it. Much like the Black community's use of Nigga or the LGBTQ+ communities use of Queer, the reappropriation of an oppressive term is a very effective means of neutralizing stereotypes and tropes. It is indicative of a type of agency taken on by speakers to claim

what has been used as an element of oppression against them as a source of identity and empowerment.

The need for preservation against threats is arguably what is at the heart of a need for strategic essentialism. Without some barometer of what is and is not "Blackness" there becomes a risk due to lack of boundaries. Essentialism, however problematic, serves as protection against any potential attempt of defining of Blackness by external non-members. As was the case with the Black Power Movement, both the label and identity of Blackness became solidified and significant as a byproduct of resistance to oppression. Blackness, while based on the essential racial category soon became a way of life, an identity to be done and not just a race to inhabit. It did not always have a positive association as a label of race and (as described in the rupture narrative presented earlier) was constructed as a means of "othering" those of African descent. The Black Power Movement, however, took up both the term and its associations with strength and power as a means of self-legitimation and a source of pride, not unlike the same narrative of hyper masculinity for Black men who took up the narrative of the aggressive hyper-sexual buck in order to preserve their historically stripped masculinities. This performative Blackness, while necessary for survival and identity, would eventually (as labels tend to do) become limiting, with stringent prescriptions of legitimized Black identity, ultimately becoming the very thing it was created to fight against, exclusion and marginalization.

It was also an attempt to offset the historical silencing of said men and to counteract the negative characteristics foisted upon them as unintelligent, violent, hyper-sexual brutes (Davis 2006; Hopkinson and Moore 2006). Despite efforts to disrupt this narrative,

these stereotypes were barely disturbed and were, in fact, taken up as representative of a rigid prescription of Black masculinity and a cogent means of enacting hyper-masculinity among non-Black speakers (Bucholtz 1999; Chun 2001; Bucholtz & Lopez 2011). Fixed definitions of Black masculinity have functioned much like the original tapered preoccupation with African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) by removing any potential for variation within Black Male-hood, and effectively excluding all who do not strictly conform to said ideological behavior, including Gay Black men. This project seeks to address these research gaps and contribute to the discussions of race, gender, and sexuality as well as intraspeaker variation.

Sexuality

This phenomenon is not limited to race, however. Such is the case with the reclamation of both Gay and Queer as terms of identity. The uptake of the term Queer led to an entire political movement aimed at defining non-heteronormativity beyond desire towards a salient identity and community as a safe haven. There is no doubt an air of power that comes not only with this term, but with the reclamation of oppressive labels by speech communities.

Just as they draw on strategic essentialism to solidify identity, members of speech communities place specific emphasis on group sanctioned means of performing identity. The Black community, in particular, places specific emphasis on "Keeping it Real" and often serve to police the behaviors of other members. Similarly, authenticity is important within the LGBTQ+ community, particularly with respect to Drag Queens and the performance of realness (i.e., managing to portray a Female persona as realistically as possi-

ble, making all Male elements invisible). Realness is critical to a successful drag performance, but the term has transcended the Drag subculture and moved into the larger LGBTQ+ community and even the mainstream. It is not unusual to hear someone say that a hearer is serving "(Noun Phrase) realness" for example, one might refer to a speaker with an impressive wig as serving "Diana Ross realness" a compliment designed to positively compare the speaker to a legendary icon of culture and fashion.

Community membership is not necessarily inherent and assumed from birth such as the case for identities linked to visible features such as race and gender. One is born into being Black, but even with such an inherent association there are times when one has to prove their membership, or at the very least, demonstrate membership with the community beyond simple possession of genetic features. In other words, one may not be mandated to "prove" they are Black, but they will almost certainly have to prove (or at the very least defend against the accusation) that they are not trying to be White. For visible minorities, it could be argued that one is typically born into their speech community or is at least raised in close proximity to it via neighborhoods, granting them almost immediate access to community members. In the case of LGBTQ+ community members, their identity is more internal which is in a sense individualized until other community members are discovered. This experience often requires that they actively seek out communities that grant them access to acceptance and familiarity much later in life. Dan manages to establish his identity via stance by using MAE (Lines 883-888). The core of this chapter is that speakers draw on linguistic resources sourced from their group memberships to maintain their identities via stance. On the surface level, it would appear that this is not

the case for Dan as a Black man. However, if we follow the Duboisean thought of double consciousness and treat Dan as an African-American Male with double identity membership (being Both Black and American simultaneously, then it would stand to reason that this dual membership would grant him access to both AAL and MAE and that using either of them could be reflective of him drawing on unique African-American identity. That said, the use of MAE does not necessarily preclude his display of Black membership as his Blackness and American-ness are indelibly linked.

Transcript 5.3 "ID from community" (Mary Jane- BIWF)

Speech communities serve as the primary source of one's first definition of identity. This may not always be the case, however. In the following Transcript, Dan discusses his rejection of prescribed identity norms by his family opting instead to define himself, and to do so more specifically based on his chosen community of friends.

Exchange # 4	**@19 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
772	Mary Jane	How do you perform your gender
773	Dan	I mean I would **jus**' say **like**
774		~**Iono I kinda don**'~
775		I jus' put on clothes
776		I walk out
777		I (.)
778		~I **dunno** in my friend groups
779		I kinda view myself as **like**~
780		the paternal like the father
781		**Cause like** I also like ask people questions like you do

Exchange # 4	**@19 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
782		Like
783		Are **you all** okay
784		Or like do **ya'll** need anythin**g**
785	Mary Jane	Mhm
786	Dan	'Oh **you're feelin**' sick today'
787		And like 'you want me to come over'
788	Mary Jane	Mhm
789	Dan	But stuff like that
790		**I guess** that's more-so
791		Me being paternal**?**
792		And (1.0) that's **like** it
793		I mean there's-
794		I just put on clothes and walk
795		And like
796		Go out about my day and just
797		Do thing**s**
798		I don't really assign **like** a masculine
799		Or **like** a feminine value to like **the things that I do**
800		But **like** people might interpret it as that
801		But **like** I don't
802	Mary Jane	Mhm
803	Dan	And I just **like** do them
804		ºAs myselfº

In this discussion with Mary Jane (BiWF) about his identity, Dan argues that he draws it more from his friends than family. He cites his own community memberships and particularly his Queer identity for how he interacts and views others. As he implicitly discusses his Queer identity and group membership, Dan employs what has been referred to as the so-called "Gay lisp" (in this case, a markedly pronounced sibilant), particularly when he says, "things" (797) as well as markers of WL such as "like"(Lines 792-803) and vocal fry. He talks about his role within his friend groups as the caregiver of others as it was performed by him and then reinforced by in-group expectations. However, a speaker is not limited to a single community. So, theoretically, if one sources their identity and the corresponding resources from community but he exists within multiple communities at once, some of which may even overlap, the boundaries placed between communities (as is discussed in Transcripts 5.1 and 5.2) may not be as clear-cut as we think.

As Dan talks about his uniquely curated identity and the ways in which it surfaces during interaction with those closest to him, he begins the discussion with AAL, displaying features such as consonant cluster reduction (Line 773) and nasal fronting (Line 774). He maintains this variety for several lines as he discusses his sense of self. However, as he specifies about the nurturing nature of his identity, he begins to shift into WL and GMS, displaying hedges and avoiding nasal fronting (Line 786). One may argue that the presence of these features does not necessarily point to WL and GMS and if they do, distinguishing between the varieties would prove difficult. These valid points illustrate the complexity not only of Dan's identity but of linguistic boundaries. Many of these features could be considered both WL and GMS and, given the above discussion of Blackness in

America encompassing mainstream membership, those very features could technically count as part of his AAL, particularly if it is Standard or Middle Class AAL (Spears 2015, Britt & Weldon 2015).

Transcript 5.4 "Are Gaydars Real" (Kelsey- BiBF)

Entrance into a community is accompanied by the acquisition of resources designed to help speakers navigate the community and index their membership. Authenticity proves crucial to membership and thus solidarity as a display, employing pre-approved resources drawn from the group which would be an effective means of expressing solidarity and attaining legitimacy.

For members of the LGBTQ+ community, the ability to decipher another persons' sexuality, particularly a person's same sex desire (often referred to colloquially as 'Gaydar') is critical for navigating a heteronormative society. Again, while desire is a strong factor, the role of performativity in the construction of sexual identity cannot be ignored. If nothing else, the correspondence of non-conforming gendered behavior can be a tip off to a speaker's membership within the LGBTQ+ community. Whether based on heteronormative behavior, instinct, or lingering eye contact, the 'Gaydar' is essential to indexing group membership for oneself and others. In the following Transcript, Dan and Kelsey (BiBF) discuss the importance of 'Gaydar' in the detection of interested partners as well as for the sake of protection from potential threats.

Exchange # 3	**@35 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1565	Dan	So y- so are Gaydar's real to you**?**

Exchange # 3	**@35 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1566		Is that like a thing or
1567	Kelsey	I feel like if y-
1568		H (**(suck teeth))**
1569		I feel like my friend says
1570		You have to be Gay to have a Gaydar
1571	Dan	**I would s-**
1572		That's probably true
1573	Kelsey	So like
1574	Dan	Yeah
1575	Kelsey	If you're not Gay
1576		Then you really-don't-know
1577		But I feel like
1578	Dan	@@^
1579	Kelsey	Okay
1580		So how do you tell if someone's Gay then
1581	Dan	How do I tell
1582	Kelsey	Yeah
1583	Dan	**I don't**
1584		I don't assume people s@@
1585	Kelsey	@@@
1586		Oh you ∅ over here **askin'** like
1587	Dan	Nah **lemme** stop
1588		**Lemme** stop
1589	Kelsey	"Oh my God do I act Gay"

Exchange # 3	**@35 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1590		**((teeth suck))** Over here
1591		But then you have to know who to go after
1592		Right
1593	Dan	**You're** right
1594	Kelsey	=Okay
1595	Dan	=But it's jus- like
1596	Kelsey	So you **gotta** feel off **they** vibes
1597		You have to look at what **they're** doing
1598		And see if **like** ="oh he's
1599	Dan	=Look
1600	Kelsey	He's **talkin**' Straight
1601		He's **walkin**' Straight"
1602	Dan	@@
1603	Kelsey	@@@like
1604		Am I am I wrong
1605	Dan	**Nah**
1606	Kelsey	**Am** I wrong
1607	Dan	But look like
1608		You just assume everybody's Straight
1609		**Cause** you **can't just** hit on everybody too = right
1610	Kelsey	=@@
1611	Dan	**Like** you you literally can't
1612		**Cause** some people might be **like** offended
1613		**Like** they might **wanna** fight **chu**

Exchange # 3	**@35 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1614		And it's like **you can't** go around
1615		Assuming like **'**oh yeah he's Gay' so
1616		**((Teeth suck))**
1617		Mm mm
1618	Kelsey	=((inaudible)
1619	Dan	=**Like** when I came here
1620		When I came to college **like**
1621		I thought everybody was Gay
1622		**Like** I thought **all the** = White people were Gay
1623	Kelsey	=@@
1624	Dan	**Like** I **legit** thought **like** ((school name)) was **like** the Gayest school
1625		**Like** ever
1626		But then **like** a week in
1627		Everybody's like
1628		"Oh yeah I have a girlfriend at home"
1629		And I'm just shocked
1630	Kelsey	@@@
1631	Dan	I'm like perplexed and it's **jus like**
1632		wow
1633		This is c-razy
1634	Kelsey	@@
1635	Dan	It was just **like** easier to find people at **like**
1636		My high school cause everybody
1637		**Iono** cause **like** everybody was Black

Exchange # 3	**@35 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1638		There was **like** a sense of **like—**
1639	Kelsey	—Are you from here
1640	Dan	No I'm from Chicago
1641	Kelsey	Oh okay
1642	Dan	Like the Southside of Chicago
1643	Kelsey	Okay
1644	Dan	And it's jus-
1645		**It** was more unity
1646		More—
1647	Kelsey	—Everyone was Black and Gay there**?**
1648	Dan	No not everyo-
1649		No I wouldn't say that
1650	Kelsey	Oh @
1651	Dan	Everybody was Black **like**
1652	Kelsey	@@ Oh
1653	Dan	But it's jus- like
1654		I dunno I could understand people
1655		I could understand people better
1656	Kelsey	=Mhm
1657	Dan	=**Cause** like with the whole cultural difference too **like**
1658		Instances of like
1659		~Something that might be a Gay act~
1660		Might not be Gay to White people
1661		And its jus-

Exchange # 3	**@35 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1662		ºYou knowº
1663		Like **iono** like **playin'** chicken
1664		Or **somethin'** like that

Here, we witness an instance in which Dan's identity is more complex than it might appear to be at first glance. Instead of race, Kelsey brings up the role of the "Gaydar" as a byproduct of sexual identity group membership. Dan explains the complexity of performed sexual identity as it intersects with one's racial identity (Line 1624-1638). This is a case in which the assumed relationship between identity categories indicates a lack of mutually exclusivity or separation/distinctness. The same rings true for language as Dan draws both on AAL and GMS in Lines 1661-64 marked by nasal fronting and the cross-over use of hedges. Dan and Kelsey discuss identity as performative as they delve into the realm of 'Gaydar'ry. Dan rejects the concept of 'Gaydar' and brings into discussion the effects of other identity dynamics in its reliability. Dan discusses with Kelsey the difficulty that comes with deciphering another person's sexual identity, and particularly the role of race in this process. He remarks on how he assumed on sight that all of the White people at his University were Gay, presumably because of their gender performance. Dan remarks that, as someone who grew up in a Black community, where hypermasculinity is the performative standard, he was aware that what might be seen as Gay for Black people might not be considered such for White people. This discussion not only points to strict

regulations for Black performativity (particularly for Males) but also points to an intersectional performativity of Black and Gay identities combined. Since he claims that it is easier for him to identify Gay people within the Black community than it is Whites, there is an implication of at least one of two assumptions which are in no way mutually exclusive: that there is a specific (perhaps more obvious) performance for Gay Black identity (Lines 1590-93 and Line 1619) and/or that there is a contrasting (assumingly more nuanced) performance of Gay White identity both of which are linked to cultural notions of acceptable gendered behavior. In short, it would appear that Dan is making the argument that Black 'Gaydar' is distinct from its White counterpart. Kelsey (a Bi-curious Black Female) poignantly notes the vitality of the 'Gaydar' for sake of companionship, but I would push her argument even further by treating 'Gaydar' as a means of seeking out other community members, given the importance of a sense of belonging for survival.

Transcript 5.5 "Course requirements" (Kelsey- BiBF)

In this next clip, Dan indexes his solidarity with both his Black and Queer identities by asserting in conversation with Kelsey that there should be certain course requirements for all White students.

Exchange # 3	**@29 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1331	Dan	Cause I'm not **sayin'**
1332		All White people
1333		Need to take like
1334		An African-American studies

Exchange # 3	**@29 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1335		And like a women's gender and sexuality class**?**
1336	Kelsey	Yeah
1337	Dan	But **like**
1338		They should
1339		**Like**
1340		It's **jus—**
1341	Kelsey	—I mean but you can't make them
1342	Dan	I mean really **we got** all these graduation requirements
1343		But they can't add on one =cl@ss
1344	Kelsey	=@@
1345		@@@
1346	Dan	'**Cause** you remember
1347		Freshman
1348	Kelsey	Cause they know
1349	Dan	Freshman seminar
1350	Kelsey	Yeah
1351		then we would have to take like a Latino
1352		Something class
1353		We would have to take a uh
1354		Everything else class
1355	Dan	**((Teeth suck))**
1356		I mean wh-
1357		How many different cultures @
1358	Kelsey	@@

Exchange # 3	**@29 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1359	Dan	Like Black hispanic slash Latino Asian
1360		**Das** like three classes
1361		But you know that's jus- me
1362		Um
1363	Kelsey	You you ∅ right
1364		After we got done **takin'** fitty-five classes

Dan's presentation is filled with the use of AAL (Lines 1340-44, 1346; and 1360-64) as a variety and while he switches briefly into GMS (Lines 1335-39), particularly when discussing Gender and Women's studies, it is clear that his focus is primarily on his Black identity. This is evidenced by the overwhelming use of AAL (indexical of his positive alignment with his Black identity) as well as content, particularly the precise focus on White people as needing to take this course. If he were not focused solely on race and ethnicity, then it would be unreasonable for him to exclude White people from learning about gender and sexuality as there are both Gay and non-cis men within the White mainstream community. The discussion concludes with a mentioning of other racial and ethnic communities to be included in the list of course requirements.

Dan's focus on calling out White people along with his use of deictic terms such as "they" (Lines 1338 and 1343) are evidence of his positioning of White people as distanced from himself (negative stance), more particularly the group with which he does

align demonstrated by his use of "we" as indexical of allegiance (Line 1342) as a student and arguably an African-American.

The mention of the other course (LGBTQ+, etc.) not only points to an alignment with Blackness, but to an alignment with disenfranchised populations and the need for those who will most likely ascend as the hegemonic influencers to understand the plight of the marginalized. Unlike Transcript 5.1, Dan draws heavily on AAL as he positively aligns with Blackness. As mentioned above, he does not solely align with his racial identity, but also displays positive stance towards his sexual identity. This complexity is reflected in his speech as he employs linguistic features such as nasal fronting (Lines 1331), consonant cluster reduction (Line 1340), suck teeth (Line 1355) and final rising intonation (Line 1335) and hedges (Line 1339) typically associated with AAL and GMS respectively.

Transcript 5.6 "Baseball" (Marc BiWM)

By including oneself in a narrative and indexing solidarity via positive stance, a speaker can display in-group membership. In the case of gender, one of the most effective means of indexing heteronormative Maleness is via participation in sports, a resource that Dan recounts his father trying to provide him. As Dan and Marc (BiWM) discuss their dislike for Baseball, they actually distance themselves from the hegemonic group membership of heteronormative masculinity and align instead with their LGBTQ+ memberships. They recount narratives of their experiences trying to fit in with a team of boys and the role of "playing" masculinity in order to be legitimately Male in the eyes of their fathers. Neither Dan nor Marc express enjoyment at being forced to participate in Baseball

due to a seemingly general lack of interest in the game, referring to it as “boring” and “taking too long”. This should be noted as it might be easy to credit their disinterest to stereotypes linked to Gay identity.

Exchange #2	**@18 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
584	Marc	my dad wasn’t too bad about this
585		I feel like for
586		I got off kind of easy
587		**um** but **like** I played little league baseball
588		and hated it and was horrible at it
589	Dan	me too
590	Marc	@@
591	Dan	that is so weird
592	Marc	@@
593	Dan	I was in little league too for **like** 3 months and I was like **oh my god**
594	Marc	@ I did it for like five years
595	Dan	oh no
596	Marc	@
597		um and my parents always said I didn’t have to keep doing it
598		but their rule was if they started the season
599		you had to finish the season
600	Dan	mhm
601	Marc	um **y’know** but like I struck out and cried
602		y’know and I got like yelled at by my dad for crying
603		cause uh **‘men are supposed to be angry’** and like

Exchange #2	**@18 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
604		I dunno
605		looking back on that that was total
606		like my dad imposing like societal bullshit
607	Dan	yeah
608	Marc	**like** on me
609		um
610		and I feel **like** if he
611		he actually could've still gotten me into the sport if he was like
612		'hey y'know you're supposed to like this you're supposed to be having fun.'
613		instead of like ___
614		that is
615		made it something I hated so much more
616	Dan	yeah
617	Marc	yeah so I **don't know**
618		I don't even remember what the question was
619		@@@
620	Dan	somethi**n'** about gender
621		I really do I remember an experience
622		**like** being on the baseball team and my dad he really wanted me to do it
623		he was like 'oh you'll get to know guys in the neighborhood" =
624		and you'll talk to boys in the neighborhood'
625		I was like I hate baseball @=

Exchange #2	**@18 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
626		it takes forever and then you have to wait your turn to swing
627		then you wait like another hour
628		it was too much @
629		but yeah
630		so you made a whole bunch of like
631		you gave a bunch of examples **talkin**' about how your gender conflicted with
632		what society or what your parents might wanted from you**?**
633	Marc	yeah

Here, the two discuss their first experiences playing baseball and the expectations associated with their gender performance. Dan explains how his father pushed him to do it as a means of performing hegemonic masculinity and earning membership into groups (i.e making friends) despite Dan's dislike for the game. In Lines 587 and 593 Dan draws on MAE, or perhaps more accurately, what would be assumed to be WL, as he carefully articulates every word he says and has a slightly raised vocal pitch. As both MAE and WL are part of his repertoire, these features could easily be associated with GME as it shares overlapping features with both varieties. Given their discussion of masculine activities such as baseball, it would be reasonable to assume that femininity is not the indexical goal of this interaction so GMS is a more likely option given the context of the conversation and relationship between the speakers. As they discuss their shared hardship, they quickly align towards one another (Line 591), bonding through the conversation.

That which they share in common is membership within a community of non-heteronormative men (Dan being Gay and Marc identifying as Bisexual). Their positive stance towards one another is indexical of a larger alignment with that community, from which they draw the language to do so. As Dan laughs and grouses about the ills of baseball and all the reasons it sucks, overlapping speech occurs as both he and Marc agree with one another. During this shared moment of disdain for the sport, Dan creates a type of solidarity with Marc not just about sports but about experiences of having to grapple with a forced heteronormative behavior that prohibited them from being themselves. Shared hardship has often proven to be a way to encourage solidarity amongst people and this seems to be no exception.

Transcript 5.7 "I don't be with like the guys" (Jabari- GBM)

Alignment or positive stance is not the only way of indexing identity group membership or solidarity. By positioning another speaking as distant or "other," one may index a type of negative alignment creating distance instead of proximity. This process may end as "we are not the same" or it may extend further leading to the indirect indexicality of a positive stance with a different group. By establishing oneself as "not like you" a speaker could indirectly align with whatever identity is interpreted as the opposite of his interlocutor in that moment. By marking White people as "they" and creating distance, Dan indirectly aligns himself with Blackness as a result of disaligning with Whiteness. In this next clip, Dan indexes out-group membership when conversing with Jabari (GBM) about Gay Black culture.

Exchange # 1	**@36 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1229	Jabari	he’s such a boy and then you see him somewhere else
1230		and he’s queenin’ out with the girls
1231		and then when the friends
1232		just like ‘oh my god **girl** he is so fine’
1233		chile, that’s a girl
1234	Dan	oh
1235	Jabari	you never had that?
1236	Dan	I don’t know I don't
1237		I don’t be with like guys I guess
1238		I don’t know
1239	Jabari	O (.) kay
1240	Dan	@@
1241	Jabari	@@
1242	Dan	well I don’t know I just like never
1243		I’ve never seen that
1244		I guess for me
1245	Jabari	well that happens a lot
1246	Dan	((suck teeth)) I guess it’s just like Atlanta life or somethin’
1247	Jabari	you you live in Atlanta, dontcha
1248	Dan	I mean I go to school here @yeah
1249	Jabari	you don’t partake in the festivities
1250	Dan	mm
1251		I haven’t **like** done anything
1252		((Unintelligible)) on campus

Exchange # 1	**@36 min.**
Line	**Speaker**
1253	except like go party at like ((nearby school))

At this point, Jabari, the more dominant personality, has seemingly established himself as the more forceful of the two, to which Dan seemingly responds in a defensive manner. The two are discussing Gay identity, particularly membership in the local Gay Black community and the performance of "effeminate" behaviors in what Jabari likes to call “queenin’ out with the girls.” This discussion was centered on a racialized, specific type of Gay identity as it is understood largely within the Black community, to which Dan responded by disaligning with the culture. He establishes himself both geographically and, in no uncertain terms, distinguishing himself from the local Gay men (translated as the Black Gay culture that is so prevalent and the hallmark of Atlanta as the “Gay Black Mecca”). As both Gay Black Males, Dan and Jabari would not be expected to negotiate race in the same manner as Dan and Marc. However, the two still negotiate race in terms of membership within the Black community which is not an uncommon occurrence for African-Americans upon meeting. The attempt to decipher “how Black” the other is could be considered a cultural phenomenon that is evidenced by countless discussions on what it means to be “Black enough” and terminology such as “Black card.” In short, his membership within and allegiance to the Black community has resurfaced in this Transcript. That said, he is still on the defense while establishing himself, and his speech reflects that.

In this Transcript, Jabari (GBM) and Dan are discussing Gay culture and the familiarity with feminine performance as a part of participating in Gay Black culture to which Dan distances himself by saying, "I don't be with … guys." In this moment of distancing himself from Black Gay behavior and identity Dan employs the tell-tale AAL element of the habitual BE (Line 1237) alongside the use of MAE (Lines 1251-53) exercising the range of his repertoire. Dan distances himself from a particular type of Black Gay identity by exerting the privilege/power associated with MAE. In this case, as he disaligns himself with Gayness , he could be aligning with Blackness, reproducing an assumed contrastive nature between the two, a common theme within Black culture. This Transcript marks the beginning of the shift towards solidarity as Dan distances himself not from Gay men as a whole, but the "guys" in reference to Gay men as he has marked them as White, drawing on his discussion (Line 1237) of being surrounded by White people. This self-distinction from White Gay men is a disalignment with White culture and could be perceived as indexical of Black membership by default.

In the above Transcript, Jabari and Dan are discussing Gay culture and the familiarity with feminine performance as a part of participating in Gay Black culture to which Dan distances himself by saying, "don't be with like guys. "Not just with the guys, but with the guys who are marked as Gay. Further, specifically Gay men who also share membership within the Black community. To be clear, Dan never says that he does not hang around with Gay men, but the framing of the statement makes it clear that "the guys" are a specific group of people, presumably Gay Black men who are similar to Bakari as he demonstrates a positive alignment with them and seemingly reacts to Dan's

disalignment as a personal distancing. Furthermore, the specification of local influence (i.e., Atlanta GBM) (Line 1247) points to the overlap of the multiple communities in which "the guys" to whom Dan is referring inhabit, demonstrating a complexity of Gay Black identity for them as well as himself. Though Dan is distancing himself from this particular community, he draws on a linguistic resource which would presumably indicate otherwise.

Jabari rejects/challenges the idea that Dan does not participate in Black Gay activities by questioning his participation in the culture, pushing him to perform a required type of Blackness. We see this corresponding with Jabari's presentation of marked AAL features (Line 1246). Dan navigates the call-out, by sucking his teeth in Line 1246. He navigates the call out (which was done in AAL, aligning the variety with aggressive/powerful speech) by employing AAL of his own in a counter aggressive maneuver, distancing himself as "not Atlantan," and disaligning with this particular type/aspect of Gay identity. He makes it clear that he does not align with the Gay Black culture which Jabari brings up, but he also makes clear that he does identify as both Gay and Black and is a member of each community respectively as is evidenced by his use of GMS and AAL. We see more complexity here. It isn't just about Black vs. White or identity variables themselves. Keep in mind, Dan intimates at Gay Black culture when talking about 'Gaydar' with Kelsey. This negative stance then may be in response to Jabari's power-driven approach. Jabari challenges Dan's assertion of distinction or lack of participation in the local community of Gay men (presumably Black) against which Dan must defend himself. Based on this presentation and Jabari's subsequent shift towards a more personal discussion

with Dan, it would appear that Jabari was, indeed, using power to gauge Dan's Black membership and has received the answer he was searching for.

5.3 DEFENDING THE MULTIPLICITY UNDER THREAT

Though I have addressed identity as multiplex for a Gay Black Male, it should be made clear that all speakers hold multiple identity group memberships. Every speaker has a race, gender, and sexual identity (not to mention countless other identities). What makes these identities multiplex is not simply the presence of more than one identity, but the internal conflict which has historically been established between them. For many speakers, their identities are simply multiple with complete harmony and cohesion. This could potentially be the case, for example, for a Straight White cisgender-heterosexual Male. As a cis-male, in a heteronormative society, he would be assumed to be heterosexual, and as a White Male, he would be expected to behave as powerful and the hegemonic "norm" or "standard." Nothing about his multiple identities violates the pre-established societal norms of what it means to be. This cohesion is just as real for certain parts of Dan's unique identity. Not every identity is in conflict. The below Transcripts examine the cohesive aspects of Dan's multiplex identity and observe how he uses intraspeaker variation for their maintenance (or lack thereof). Exploring identity as sourced from group memberships and enacted via group associated resources such as speech is simple enough. This section explores Dan's multi-group membership and how his identities interact with one another while housed within him as a linguistic individual. The demonstration of identity is simple enough via use of language varieties. However, we have yet to consider the process of indexing different identity memberships for a speaker with an intersection-

al identity. Research around intra-speaker variation and bilingualism has explored the phenomena as code-switching and shifting. But, largely, the approach has considered the codes and their corresponding identities as in complementary distribution: one may use MAE in a formal setting but AAL in a more relaxed environment and never the two shall meet. However, intraspeaker variation is rarely that cut and dry and the notion of varieties being equally valuable in all settings is rarely taken into consideration. More specifically, the notion of resources competing for the same spot and the linguistic (and identity) conflict which could ensue is rarely addressed. In this section, I examine the ways in which Dan indexes multiple identity group memberships both singularly and at once and explore how he keeps a balance between them when they are competing for priority.

As Dan holds multiple memberships in speech communities as Black, Gay, and Male, one must assume that he holds a uniquely complex identity from which he sources his sense of self and respective resources. That said, many questions arise: how does he manage to maintain active membership in three different communities at once? What does it mean to hold multiple identities? Does his membership in one conflict with the others? Or do they all exist in their own realms in complementary distribution? This section explores these questions, particularly the last two, analyzing how Dan's multiple speech community memberships connect or conflict with one another.

As seen in section 5.2, by aligning and othering himself with his interlocutors, Dan orients himself to them based on the identity group memberships they may or may not share. This process serves to establish and preserve his own membership via allegiance which is audience design at its finest (Bell 1984). However useful stance may be as a tool

of maintaining identity, it only allows for a single identity to be addressed at a time. We have yet to address the alignment process as it relates to multiple identity membership and specifically cases during which more than one membership may lead to intra-repertoire animosity towards the other. In this section, I explore the ways in which multiple identities are simultaneously managed by observing Dan's use of intraspeaker variation as indexical of multiple stances taken.

To hold membership in groups which are historically in conflict with one another is the essence of Duboisian double consciousness (Dubois 1903). A speaker must navigate through two different worlds at once, always mindful of their unique position and the impending conflicts to be negotiated. While Dubois (1903) has faithfully defined what that journey has meant for African-Americans in daily life, we have very little insight into the internal processes which guide these negotiations. Recent work from Tracey Weldon (in press) explores these processes, particularly with regard to class and language. In the following Transcripts, I observe Dan's multiple stance taking processes in hopes of examining determining factors for his self-positioning during situations in which his identities are positioned against one another.

Transcript 5.8 "Change my race" (Cody- SBM)

Exchange # 5	**@5 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
152	Dan	Yeah
153		I know cause like when I was a kid
154		I kinda like thought I w-

Exchange # 5	**@5 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
155		I could change my race
156		Or like I kinda wanted to
157		Cause I wanted this like particular hairstyle
158	Cody	Mhm
159	Dan	And my mom was like “no”
160		And she was like “you can’t do that because you’re Black”
161		And I was just like ‘oh okay **((suck teeth))** well yeah’
162		And then she didn’t follow it up by **saying**
163		“Oh you can get like an Afro” or **anything** else
164		She just like told me **flat out** “no”
165		I was just like-
166	Cody	-So just because she said “because you’re Black”
167		You couldn’t get the hairstyle
168	Dan	Yeah it was like-
169		You remember those emo:
170		Like the emo kinda (.) haircuts
171		That uh people had when they were like teens
172		And **like** goth and stuff
173	Cody	M m
174	Dan	No?
175		You don’t remember dat st-
176		-no
177		**Oop** was that jus me
178	Cody	Mm:

Exchange # 5	**@5 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
179		Maybe so
180	Dan	Oooh uh-
181		Okay alright
182	Cody	@@
183	Dan	Alrighty

In this conversation with Cody (SBM), Dubois' double consciousness is front and center as Dan attempts to explain the conflict he experienced as an adolescent wanting to feel included in the mainstream American culture while grappling with the limitations that being Black placed on said participation. More than this, Dan strives to frame his narrative carefully as to avoid the accusation of self-hatred, which looms over the conversation, while preserving his authentic narrative.

When the topic comes up between Dan and Cody, Dan presents a moment of vulnerability as he explains feeling left out of mainstream society while also feeling insufficiently Black due to want of an "Emo hairstyle." The hairstyle is reminiscent of the Emo (emotional) musical era of the late 1990s and early 2000s, during which pop music characterized the darkness and emotional angst of the "Goth(ic)" subculture. As Dan recounts his desire to participate in mainstream culture, he does so with MAE (Lines 168-72) reproducing this positive alignment. Dan clearly took part in the mainstream movement and wanted to further index his membership by getting a similar hairstyle. Being told that he couldn't was the first blow, feeling as if he could never be fully part of the culture, but

being told that it was because he was Black was a second strike leaving him in between worlds not fitting into either.

Dan shares with Cody this very personal narrative about his desire to change his race as a child or the belief that he could do so based on the desire for a particular hairstyle. This particular narrative is demonstrative of vulnerability and an attempt at solidarity with Cody's marked self-corrections and extremely careful speech. As Dan voices his mother's rejection of that hairstyle which she attributes to race, he uses a very direct and curt "no" and implies that she presented little to no explanation beyond his Blackness. Dan speaks of a desire not necessarily to be White but to want something associated with and thus indexical of Whiteness. Despite Dan's innocence and desire to fit into the mainstream, the message sent was that he (in that historical moment) did not wish to align himself with Blackness. As the conversation continues, we see Dan vacillate between AAL (Line 161) and MAE (Lines 162-3) as he attempts to position himself between both communities. Cody attempts to empathize as Dan continues referencing the Emo period but his lack of familiarity with the popular mainstream era makes the attempt at solidarity unsuccessful placing Dan in a powerless and ostracized position. As Dan makes the effort to explain and perhaps jog Cody's memory of the epoch, he seeks out solidarity and uses AAL (Lines 175-77) features such as eth-stopping (i.e,. "dat" for "that") while attempting to align with Cody. The interaction ends in an awkward manner with the topic simply fizzling out, not being taken up by Cody.

In this case, Dan is genuinely expressing the seeming conflict between his Blackness and membership or participation in the larger mainstream community. Such conflicts

as this, paired with the above discussion of Whiteness as the norm (Transcripts 5.1 and 5.2) makes the conflation of mainstream and Whiteness a feasible reality. This conflation makes the placement of Blackness in opposition to the mainstream completely logical. However, this seeming conflict is problematic in that it does not take into consideration Dubois' (1903) double consciousness as more than an awareness of both Blackness and Whiteness but the existence in both worlds simultaneously. A dual existence which would negate the assumption that one would have to choose or that there would be inherent conflict, which would be accurately depicted via the repertoire model. It should be noted that Dan never flat out rejected his race during this encounter or within his narrative which he clarifies by saying he thought he could change his race, indicating a sense of racial flexibility or an ability to move between the races. This belief about his race as a child pushes beyond the idea of a dual consciousness to one that may be singular containing both worlds within it and allowing him to transcend whatever perceived boundaries there may be. Dan's dual existence in mainstream and the African-American community are reflected in his intra-sentential code-shifting between MAE and AAL in Lines 162-4. He employs both varieties closely together blurring the lines that presumably exist between them.

In this next Transcript, Dan recounts the same narrative to Mary Jane (BiWF), but the interaction moves in a completely different direction. There is little evidence of a requirement to choose between being Black and American from Mary Jane. However, there does still seem to be an unspoken conflict which informs a prioritization of one identity over the other.

Transcript 5.9 "Emo hairstyle (Mary Jane- BiWF)

Exchange # 4	**@41 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1843	Dan	I remember when I was **like** 10 or something
1844		And I wanted this **hairstyle**
1845		And my parents were **like**
1846		"No you can't do that cause you're Black"
1847		**Like** they didn't provide anything else
1848	Mary Jane	@@@@@@@
1849	Dan	To be like ="oh you can do all these other hairstyles"
1850	Mary Jane	=You d@@@
1851	Dan	It was just like a simple no**?**
1852	Mary Jane	Mhm
1853	Dan	And just saying
1854		You cannot do something
1855		Instead of being like
1856		"Oh you can do all these other things with your hair"
1857		instead
1858		And it's jus like
1859		Also being told 'no'
1860		In other instances of **like**
1861		Going to **like** a specific high school
1862		That was like a White high school
1863		Like in uh it wasn't in my area
1864		But it was like in Chicago
1865	Mary Jane	Mhm

Exchange # 4	**@41 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1866	Dan	Like that wasn't in the Southside
1867		And then being told 'no' and **jus**
1868		Like when you **wanna** go into **like** a specific setting
1869		But **there's like** all White people
1870	Mary Jane	Mhm
1871	Dan	And it's jus **like**
1872		**Like** que- like times **like** those
1873		When I was younger
1874		And I would always be **like**
1875		'Oh I wish I was White'
1876		And then like
1877		I could be able to do all those other things that I can't
1878		But now **like** right now
1879		I don't really care
1880		**Like** I I love being Black
1881		So it's like fine
1882		But like when I was a kid
1883		I was very like impressionable
1884		In like I guess it was like also
1885		more desirable to be White**?**
1886		And like to be **like** light skinned at least
1887		Or somethi**n** like that
1888	Mary Jane	ºMhmº
1889	Dan	And like I wasn't that either

Exchange # 4	**@41 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1890		So it was just like
1891		What am I**?**
1892	Mary Jane	Mhm
1893	Dan	But now I know who I am

Dan shares this narrative another time with Mary Jane, the White Female who not only exhibits familiarity with the haircut and Emo culture but actively attempts to draw more information out of Dan about his feelings concerning the situation creating an environment that is much more conducive to empathy and solidarity. From the onset of the conversation there are multiple uses of hedges such as "like" alongside common markers of WL (Lines 1844-47; 1851.) In this interaction, he voices his parents again but in a higher pitched, yet mocking, tone which is almost comical in effect. He laments not being giving other options of the things he could do with his hair instead of having the focus placed on a race-based limitation. As he carefully pronounces each word, particularly the /k/ release in "like" (lines 1868-86), there is a sense of self-monitoring and hypercorrectness that is a not uncommon trait associated with both WL and GMS. In this case, though he is discussing his Black identity, he would appear to be exhibiting solidarity with Mary Jane as an "other" and using a linguistic variety shared by both varieties (WL). He goes on to address several other instances where he had been rejected or not granted access to certain spaces or activities linked to Whiteness and the assumed conflict they posed towards his Black identity as perceived by others. This markedness has in some

way contributed to an "otherness" and sense of being left out and excluded which has contributed to Dan's self-perception and esteem in relation to his race. He continues by addressing colorism[15] (Jones 2000) and the role that dark skin played in his sense of self in an effort to find who he is. As he voices his younger self who "wishes (he) was White," the use of the term is demonstrative of an AAL (Line 1887) usage but the tone of his voice is high pitched, with an intonational contour that is indexical of MAE if only in affect (Tarone 1973, Holliday 2016, Weldon 2018). It is a significant marker of what Whiteness is perceived to sound like for Black people sometimes taken on when employing the "telephone voice" as well as when imitating White people for comedic effect (Preston 1992, Rahman 2004).

Gay identity as in conflict with Blackness has been briefly explored as a result both of notions of Blackness as masculine by default and the role of religion in African-American culture. The following Transcript explores the other side of the narrative: Black identity as in conflict with Gay identity given the mainstream marking of Gay identity as White. Discrimination against people of color within the Gay community is in no way unheard of (Cornelius and Barrett 2019). Until the recent boom of intersectionality and Queer studies, the face of the Gay community was overwhelmingly White and cis-male. In the following Transcript, Dan discusses his malaise with the lack of change in this representation over the years.

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[15] Jones defines colorism as discrimination against an individual based on skin color variations, typically if it is darker (though not exclusively), within racial groups.

Transcript 5.10 "Gay = White" (Barry O.- SWM)

Exchange # 6	**@41 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1647	Dan	I mean
1648		**((Suck teeth))** a little bit
1649		I just sometimes I'll **like**
1650		I **guess** with the images of Gay people on tv
1651		And like even images of like Gay or
1652		Rights organizations**?**
1653		Like the HRC
1654	Barry O.	Sure
1655	Dan	**They**'re all like White Gay men
1656		**Like it's** not **like**
1657		Any **like** Black Gay men
1658		Or **like** any trans people
1659	Barry O.	x
1660	Dan	Like the predominant images of those
1661	Barry O.	Sure
1662		Sure sure sure
1663	Dan	**White Gay men wanting Gay marriage**
1664	Barry O.	Yeah I think that that's probably more salient
1665		For non White identity
1666	Dan	Mhm
1667	Barry O.	Especially- Jesus
1668		In Latin American culture
1669		Machismo is everything

Exchange # 6	**@41 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1670	Dan	Yeah
1671	Barry O.	I think that the performance of homosexual identity
1672		In Latin American culture is super
1673		Super stigmatized
1674	Dan	Mhm
1675	Barry O.	So (.)
1676		Yeah I think it's probably more salient for
1677		Non-White cultures

One thing is made clear in this exchange – for many, to be Gay is to be White which leaves precious little room for Gay men of color to be represented, leading to a conflict in identity stemming from both communities. This narrative is solidified by cultural assumptions of Gay identity as "White folks' stuff." Because of the White standardization of Gay identity, Dan is once again placed in a position where he must choose who to align with. It is clear through his critique that he is othering himself from the Gay community as it is represented in the mainstream and aligning himself with Queer people of color specifically. This stance is evident not just by content but also his use of AAL as evidenced by the uses of suck teeth and existential *it* (Lines 1648 and 1656 respectively) during moments of self-othering.

While Dan's commentary accurately points to the cultural marking of Gay identity as White by default both by Gay men and the mainstream, his discussion points to a lack

of intersectional treatment of Gay identity which Dan seems to accept as a reality, however temporary. Instead of critiquing those who have arguably Whitewashed or co-opted, a colorless/color transcended Gay identity as White he addresses the Gay community as if it truly were Gay, pointing to the success of this narrative, even if challenged. Once again, the limits of labels points to complexity of identity and our cultural inability to articulate the existence of multiplex identity.

There are also cases in which one can have multiple identities and there be no conflict between them, as is often reflected in cases of bilingualism and diglossia. Speakers are made aware (presumably by their speech communities) of circumstances under which each language (or display of identity) is appropriate. One would use each respectively and they would exist in complementary distribution and as long as everyone stays in their place, there should be no problem. But what happens when they don't stay in their place?

Drawing on hegemonic notions of gender as conflated with sexuality, to be Male is to seek sexual conquests over women, so the two identities strengthen one another. In Dan's case, to be Male and Black leads to minimal conflict due to the historical establishment of both Blackness as Male by default and Black as masculine (read aggressive) during the early Black Liberation movements. This, in conjunction with Blackness as hyper masculine leads to virtually total cohesion between Blackness and Maleness and more specifically Blackness and aggression. In the below Transcript, we observe a case during which Dan exhibits this cohesion between his Black and Male identities while talking to Jabari about his frustrations with historically Black colleges and Universities.

Transcript 5.11 "Play wit my money/What we're not gonna do" (Jabari- GBM)

Exchange # 1	**@50 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1682		um **it's a** 10 year difference
1683		time-wise
1684		that's crazy
1685	Jabari	and I look 25
1686	Dan	okay. Yeah
1687	Jabari	**SHADE**!
1688		**GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE**
1689		**We** ∅ **READY** LET'S GO@@
1690		@@
1691		uh it's over **it's a wrap**
1692		it's a wrap
1693		what are you studying here
1694	Dan	I think I'm a psych and I dunno I might be pre-law
1695	Jabari	Ah yeah
1696	Dan	but we'll see
1697	Jabari	you wanna be a lawyer?
1698	Dan	/Iono/
1699	Jabari	watchu mean you don't know
1700		what do you know
1701		I think I've asked you a few questions and
1702	Dan	I don't even know like why I'm in school like
1703	Jabari	why didn't you- yeah why didn't you go to a HBCU
1704	Dan	**((teeth suck))'cause** HBCUs they play /**witcho**/ money

Exchange # 1	**@50 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1705		I'll tell you that
1706		they play **with your** money ( )
1707	Jabari	**whatchu** mean they play **witchour** money
1708	Dan	they they did not answer the phone
1709		financial aid office **don't** even answer the phone
1710		the phone was off the hook **okay?**
1711		like I call it 'beep' 'beep' beep'
1712		**like no**
1713		and then I email them
1714		they ∅ sayin' call
1715		what am I s'posed to do
1716	Jabari	wh=
1717	Dan	=then it's after the May first deadline
1718		for like a deposit and
1719		I'm not 'bout to deposit if like I don't have a financial aid package
1720	Jabari	what school is- are these
1721	Dan	I only applied to ((prominent HBCU))
1722		'cause that's the only one I like
1723		would go to
1724		but they play /wɪt/ my money
1725		((local University))'s financial aid package was good enough
1726		I'm still 'bout to be broke as hell but
1727		that's life
1728	Jabari	((Inhale)) yeah yeah yea

Exchange # 1	**@50 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1729	Dan	h
1730	Jabari	and this is just college
1731		this is the good days
1732		you wait ‘till you get my age
1733		when you have mortgage and car notes and
1734		car insurance and phone bills-
1735	Dan	-well hopefully I’ll have a career and stuff
1736	Jabari	I have a career
1737		sh- still eat the shit
1738	Dan	I- ((exhale) it’s too much
1739	Jabari	I’m not flippin’ burgers at MacDonald’s
1740		nigga you tried it
1741	Dan	I didn’t say that
1742	Jabari	Thing is you implied it
1743	Dan	how
1744	Jabari	@@@
1745	(Bri enters)	wait yeah yeah
1746		@@
1747		he just
1748		((unintelligible))
1749		he didn’t answer **not naan** question
1750	Bri	**not naan** huh
1751		you see how they do
1752	Dan	I did answer some questions

Exchange # 1	**@50 min.**
Line	**Speaker**
1753	**what we're not gonna do in here is lie**

This final interaction with Jabari demonstrates the peak of Dan's performance of Black masculinity. Much like his final interaction with Marc, the identity factor that he presents in the final moments points to a common identity factor he shares with his interlocutor. As he has become more comfortable and established in his identity, he exhibits more behavior and language that index the very group membership in the Black community that was in question earlier in the conversation.

This Transcript is where we see the full force of Dan's AAL surface as well as the extremes of Jabari's candor (Line 1740). In this rant-like Transcript, Dan's frustration with the bureaucracy of historically Black colleges incites great frustration and draws heavily on AAL throughout the conversation (Existential "it" in Line 1682, "Iono" in Line 1698, and the phrase "not naan" 1749) . Not only does his pronunciation change in he also employs AAL features (/witcho/ (Line 1704), tonal semantics, and nasal fronting (Line 1721) as his voice is lined with aggression as he exhibits tell-tale signs of AAL such as copula absence (Line 1714), 'bout to (Line 1726)," and lexical/semantic phrases attributed to AAL such as "play with your money" which bears great significance in the Black community as a serious offense. Given the visceral reaction to merely discussing having his money played with (translation: not taken seriously and not handled efficiently

enough for him to feel secure), it is clear that Dan knows full well the significance of the phrase.

This moment of intense emotion and aggression plays on the expected performance of Blackness that was encouraged (perhaps even provoked) by Jabari and reproduces not so much the ideology of Black men as hyper-aggressive (I'm sure most people would be perturbed by the mishandling of their finances) but that of the alignment of AAL with aggression/powerful speech by using it so fluently in a moment of such powerful emotion. This type of scenario would warrant an aggressive maneuver or at least a significant confrontation making direct and perhaps aggressive speech fitting in order to resolve the issue at hand. It should be noted that this was the absolute final interaction between the two men and, while Dan presented several AAL features throughout the conversation often in response to Jabari's provocations and constant challenging of his racial and sexual identities, nothing compared to this final performance. He had become comfortable enough with Jabari to even "pop back" (i.e., to respond to or counter a challenge) at times of provocation. However, when the topic of HBCU's arose, it seemed to strike a very sensitive nerve, perhaps because it was still a relatively recent scenario, given his freshman status and his ultimate choice to attend a Private White Institution. Emotions notwithstanding, what may appear to be powerful speech, in this case, may simply be the use of AAL to express his frustration with HBCU's. Said frustration also points to the possibility of a defensive move as this interaction may have been interpreted as a challenge to Blackness (due to his choice of a PWI over an HBCU).

This is yet another example of solidarity as it has developed between Dan and Jabari. As I returned to the room at the very end of the interaction (Line 1745), I inquired about how everything went between the speakers. Jabari interjected using an intense version of AAL with the descriptor "not naan" basically meaning "absolutely none" in reference to the questions that Dan answered. He not only called out his perceived lack of participation by Dan but exaggerated making it appear as though he never even spoke. I joined in on the play to draw a response from the two speakers and demonstrate my own AAL proficiency. Dan responded to being ganged up on with a classic AAWL (African American Women's Language) maneuver and asserts that "what we're not gonna do is (insert Verb Phrase)." Technically, this maneuver could also qualify as GBMS (Gay Black Male Speech) as the situation could easily have been navigated as one would address shade throwing, particularly if the speaker is on the defensive. This is a common means of not only establishing a boundary about what the speaker will (or will not tolerate) but positioning oneself as powerful, dictating to the listener not what they should or could do, but what they will not do, taking hold of their own agency. This would appear to be an extremely power-based move, which would be completely counterproductive to establishing solidarity, but based on this example and several others, I would argue that power can be a strong means of facilitating solidarity, not just defeating it. This would imply that the two are not mutually exclusive and may serve to aid in one another's existence. The issue of power came up much more in the interactions between Dan and Bakari, invoking the supposition/stereotype that Black people really are more aggressive in speech. However, as I focused more closely on the banter between the two men and the playful

familiarity that surfaced as a result, I began to wonder if power-play was a part of negotiating Blackness. It is not unheard of for marginalized groups to negotiate with things they have been deprived of and in this light, power negotiations among African- Americans- a group of people who have been historically stripped of power (especially the men), to play with power amongst themselves in an intra-cultural setting for a number of reasons (Smitherman 1998). The speech events: Reading, Toasting, Call-Outs, and Shade-throwing point to a cultural requisite to establish one's place within the community and social groups in an almost ritualistic way. These acts are not just to play or entertain but could very well be seen as a means of orienting oneself and a vital practice in the negotiation, maintenance, and performance of Blackness. That being said, what is seemingly a power issue on the surface, may actually be a means to an end resulting in a type of solidarity amongst speakers, should one successfully establish that they can "hang," "stomp with the big dogs," or "hold their own" when it comes to power and Blackness, which Dan did during negotiations considering he was able to adequately defend himself and maintain his face.

If it is socially sanctioned to be Black and Male as well as Male and Straight, it would stand to reason that to be Black and Straight would also be a logical cooperative relationship. This would explain why there is a subset of people within the Black community who believe the "Gay agenda" to be a threat against Black Male identity (often treated as masculinity by default association). The alignment of Black masculinity with Straightness is displayed in this next Transcript where Dan and Kelsey *mark* closeted Gay Black men performing Black Straight identity.

This points to not only his Blackness or his masculinity but both simultaneously as they intermingle with one another. Further, his apparent "aggression" in no way rules out his Gay identity as surfacing at the same time because as he indexes his racial identity, he also presents the racialized sexual identity that could lead to him being marked as a uniquely Gay Black man. Gay Black men draw heavily on power interactively and culturally through the speech events of reading, shade throwing. The presence of various AAL elements which could crossover to GMS via AAWL and into MAE point not only to a cohesion between his racial, gender, and sexual identities but to that of his linguistic resources as it is almost impossible to tease apart what features are/are not markers of each distinct linguistic category.

Transcript 5.12 "Morehouse" (Kelsey- BiBF)

Exchange # 3	**@41 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1858	Dan	—I heard that happens in alot
1859		At all girl schools jus—
1860	Kelsey	—Right like you just like
1861	Dan	Yeah **like** was it Saint Agnes like college or somethi**n'**
1862	Kelsey	Yeah
1863	Dan	heard **like** some things
1864	Kelsey	h@@
1865	Dan	And at Morehouse
1866		I hear things about that too
1867	Kelsey	Really

Exchange # 3	**@41 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1868	Dan	Yeah like
1869		Th- the Gay
1870		Like Morehouse **has** always been like a Gay school
1871		or **somethin'** like that
1872	Kelsey	I have heard that
1873	Dan	Yeah
1874	Kelsey	But then I've heard that really like
1875		Masculine men go there
1876		So they're just like
1877		'**Nah** man I **ain't** Gay'
1878	Dan	**((Teeth suck))**
1879		Mhm but it's just like
1880	Kelsey	@@
1881	Dan	You~gotta~watch~out?
1882	Kelsey	@@@@@
1883	Dan	That's what my friend **say**
1884		*You gotta watch out*
1885	Kelsey	@@@@@
1886	Dan	Cause he goes there and
1887		He was just **like** approached
1888		And he's not Gay
1889	Kelsey	ah:
1890	Dan	And then he was just like
1891		"Woah. That's crazy"

Exchange # 3	**@41 min.**
Line	**Speaker**
1892	Kelsey Right

As Dan and Kelsey discuss the exploration of sexuality at gender exclusive schools, their discussion quickly turns to the HBCUs[16] in Atlanta and the rumors of large Gay populations within them. Again, drawing on the cultural secrecy around Gay identity which exists within the Black community, Dan and Kelsey find common ground and solidarity with one another based on race. The two draw on AAL (Lines 1861-660 as Kelsey (Line 1877) presents the supposition that the men at Morehouse are hyper masculine, voicing a trope-like Male figure using AAL while Dan sucks his teeth (Line 1878), indicating a disbelief in said presentation. Kelsey responds with laughter to this reaction as she knows how often hyper masculinity can be used as a mask to hide one's sexuality or be "on the down low" (an expression used to refer to closeted Gay men or men who participate in same-sex sex but who reject the label of Gay as a reflection of denial (Johnson 1982)) within the community. Both chortle as Dan humorously retorts "but cha gotta watch out!" which is interesting commentary on the physical threat of violence that can accompany the outing of Black men who find discord between their sexual desire and sense of gender performance. Said men will become so enraged, they may physically lash

[16] Historically Black Colleges and Universities

out. Further, there is an unspoken predatory element of closeted Gay men attempting to "trap" openly Gay men for the sake of sex, but not a relationship.

In both this Transcript and the one of the Gay uncle (Transcripts 4.8), Dan and Kelsey move beyond power dynamics towards an aligning stance of solidarity. What is interesting is that though their connection seems to be built on shared cultural experiences as African-Americans, and their use of AAL exhibits such, Dan also draws on WL and AAWL as they connect. From the use of "stahp" (to encourage jest) to "like" (as a hedge) and teeth sucking (to express disdain) which is less commonly attributed to Straight Black men, the two almost seem to solidify their connection via women's speech features. It should be considered then that these features may not be solely used to index gender or as simply power yielding but as a means of building solidarity between group members. When Black women use the term "chile!" it is rarely demeaning but a term to be shared with someone with whom there is a relationship and who has an implied understanding of the word as indexical of said relationship.

Transcript 5.13 "Gaydar thrown off" (Marc- BiWM)

In the following Transcript, I examine how Dan's 'Gaydar,' a critical resource provided by his membership within the Gay community is influenced by his racially based understandings of gender performativity.

Transcript #2	**@30 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
900	Dan	yeah

Transcript #2	**@30 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
901		yeah I just think that well
902		cause I have the difference of like being
903		going to an all Black elementary school
904		and an all Black high school
905		and now I'm at ((local University)) and it's just like
906		the different expectations for gender in the
907		performance of those things is really different here?
908	Marc	mhm
909	Dan	Because I felt like
910		I really thought that half the guys here were Gay
911	Marc	@@@@@
912	Dan	and it's just differing I guess gender performances I guess
913		and I just um
914		yeah it was just the different gender performances
915		cause I'm like-I guess Black communities
916		it's more hyper-masculine
917		so I-I guess I'm able to see like Gay people easier
918		but here it's just like whoa
919		like my "Gaydar" was just thrown off
920	Marc	@@@
921	Dan	I was really lost

In this exchange, Dan and Marc discuss the intersection between race and sexuality. Again, both participants employ cooperative speech as well as Gay culture content

('Gaydar' reference), marking a common ground between the two. In this case, power does not seem to be a factor as the speakers are on equal footing discussing a common identity group membership. As Dan draws from multiple varieties, moving back and forth through MAE (Line 902), WL (Lines 907, 912-15), and GMS (Line 910) around the topic of Gay identity, it would seem that he has shifted into a performance of Gay identity and away from power, though the two are by no means mutually exclusive. Instead, the two seem to be matching one another in an apparent process of solidarity building.

Since it cannot be assumed that MAE is Dan's sole default variety (or that he even has a single "default" variety at all), it must be instead considered that he shifts into it based on his audience. That said, Marc's race is not necessarily the sole motivation for this shift and, as solidarity between the two has been built with the facilitation of their common membership in the LGBTQ+ community, it could just as easily be that his use of MAE is part of his indexicality of this common membership. Given his own complex identity, Marc may speak another variety and may be adapting to MAE as well as a common variety. This would be a justification for the need to tease apart these categories and observe how Dan would orient himself to a Straight White Male when in a similar position of power. Without the common element of Gay identity, what would be expected is surface MAE without features directly associated with GMS or WL with the exception being an automatic link of MAE to feminine/powerless speech. Further research would be required to better understand the complexities presented. Here, Dan thoroughly explains the role of gender performances and the differences based on race as they pertain to his 'Gaydar.' He explicates how for Black people, the culture is more hyper masculine

and thus Gay people (assumingly men who deviate from the norm of masculinity) are easier to spot. He then compares that experience to his at a private institution and claims that the stark contrast has thrown his 'Gaydar' off. This would imply that a 'Gaydar' is not necessarily something one is born with (akin to one's sexual desire) and may be a tool acquired through community membership as communicative competence. At the very least, it demonstrated that 'Gaydars' are in some way informed by and fall subject to heteronormative ideologies and notions of culturally sanctioned gendered behavior.

In this exchange between Dan and Marc, the two men are still discussing the performance of Gay identity, but more the detection of it, i.e., the "Gaydar." What is interesting about this Transcript is that it is rooted in the intersection of race and sexuality as Dan expresses the role that racialized prescriptions of masculinity have played in his ability to detect Gay men. He expresses his own experience as both Gay and Black. At this point, we have reached the latter portion of the conversation as the interaction between them may indicate. Their level of comfort with one another seems to have increased and they appear to negotiate around each other differently as a result, having built a rapport seemingly rooted in their shared non-Straight identities. In this exchange, the two speakers discuss the intersection between race and sexuality. Again, both participants employ cooperative speech as well as Gay culture content ("Gaydar" reference), marking a common ground between the two. As Dan draws from multiple varieties, moving back and forth through MAE (Line 902), WL (Lines 907, 912-15), and GMS (Line 910) around the topic of Gay identity, it would seem that he has shifted into a performance of Gay identity and is no longer solely negotiating power. Instead, the two seem to be matching one another

in an apparent process of solidarity building. One might add that he is aligning himself with the LGBTQ+ community of which they are both members.Dan talks about experiencing conflict between his Black identity and his Gay identity. He alludes to drawing on a difference in gendered performance as linked to race and how this has affected his ability to detect others' sexuality. He draws on both the hyper masculine performance of Black men and the comparatively feminine performance of White men asserting that he "thought everyone was Gay" specifically everyone who was surrounding him in an all-White environment. This points not only to a reproduction of the conflation of gender with sexuality, making constructed gender performance salient for detecting one's sexuality. It also takes into consideration the role of race in expectations of gendered behavior and sexuality by default when detecting a speaker's sexual membership.

Though code-meshing[17] (Young 2011) seems to be a viable resource for indexing multiple allegiances at once and maintaining a cohesive identity, there are still many questions to pursue, particularly in relation to identities which do conflict with one another. How can speakers with multiple identity group memberships move these towards cohesion when there is still the expectation that they be in conflict. How do they decide which identity is primary? Does it matter? Is Dan a Gay Black Male or a Black Gay man? Based on Dan's use of intraspeaker variation to index multiplex memberships, one thing is particularly notable. He does not prioritize a single identity every time. He shifts his priorities based on context. In some instances, in which Dan's Blackness is challenged, he

[17] In Chapter 2 I define code meshing as the simultaneous mixture of two varieties as one draws from them each in concert.

aligns himself with it (as was the case in Transcript 5.10 where he critiqued the Gay community's White-washing). It would seem then that when it comes to conflicting allegiances, Dan's shifting is based on whichever identity needs to be immediately defended within the moment. This, however, is not a hard and fast rule, as Dan may feel no need to defend an identity that he feels rooted in or that he does not believe needs protected. However, we have a limited understanding of his intentions. That said, his code-shifting does not appear to be solely about alliances, but also about preserving each identity in a singular triage-like fashion, not for the sake of placing one above the other but for the sake of keeping them all within his repertoire. He is shifting allegiances just as he is shifting his language, but he is doing so to keep his repertoire intact. He is a Gay Black Male (among several other things) in no particularly set order.

It is because of this that I hypothesize that in addition to repertoires being composed of multiple elements (identities and linguistic varieties), these elements exist side by side divided by walls which are not completely fixed and perhaps even porous. When I address the boundaries as porous, I am speaking of a lack of rigidity of the walls that could separate linguistic varieties within a repertoire. This approach gives space for the complexity of the varieties themselves as demonstrated by the limits of their confines. While helpful, these labels have led precious little room for variation and expansion. Additionally, to conceptualize the borders as having holes in them would be a helpful way of making sense of overlapping features shared by more than one variety, particularly if the multiple varieties in question have a history of linguistic contact. Identities don't just intersect, they are intertextual. They are not just additive they overlap and inform one an-

other. Elements may cross boundaries and impact one another within a repertoire. This is partially evidenced by our conflation of gender and sexuality. Our constructed understandings of gender and sexuality influence one another. It is how we can end up with "fems" "bears" and even "butch queens[18]." These labels point to an understanding that as we do our sexuality, our own notions of gender (preconceived or authentically sourced) influence that identity. It is not shocking that race would also influence these factors both separately and together.

5.4 CONCLUSION

"Language varieties will always be fuzzy prototype categories that overlap with one another." - Barrett (2003 p. 558)

By using the linguistic varieties associated with the identities with which he wishes to align himself, Dan (inter)actively maintains each identity group within which he holds membership. One of the ways he does so is by shifting back and forth between codes to index solidarity based on circumstantial necessity. There are moments when he must prioritize or triage the identity which is the most vulnerable at the time, and arguably uses the others to shield said identity, averting potential dissonance.

In instances where there is more cohesion between identities, we see less stark switches in linguistic codes. I would argue that Dan's use of language in these situations is more reflective of his multiple identities instead of a means of indexing a singular stance towards any one group. He is able to align with more than one identity simultane-

[18] "X queen" is a formation intended to describe a type or subset of Gay identity, in this case, Gay men who behave in a stylized feminine manner, those who have a burly stature, and those who behave in a stylized masculine manner respectively.

ously and this is evident through his use of what Young (2011) refers to as code-meshing. I would like to distinguish the types of intraspeaker variation based on this term. Though there tends to be a conflation of terms like code-mixing and code-switching when discussing intraspeaker variation, in Dan's case, he seems to be shifting when there is an intra-repertoire conflict which necessitates momentary alignment with one over the other. But when this conflict ceases to exist, his repertoire of identity is in harmony with all memberships existing alongside one another. His use of language is a display of that as well as a means of indexing alignment with them all as they align with one another.

The exclusive focus on monoliths is not only confining and discriminatory but also leaves too much space for tropes and stereotypes (to be discussed in the next chapter). Instead, we must begin to shift our focus to include the context of the repertoire as we analyze language and identity within specific moments of talk. To name something can be useful but it also is a way of delimiting something, blocking out any space for complexity or internal variation. Being bound to a limited definition prevents the embracing of a full multiplex identity. Labels and linguistic means are useful for preservation and establishment but should not be limiting. There is more than one way to speak and be.

By observing Dan's use of language, I would theorize that repertoires are not composed of features which exist haphazardly but that they coalesce into variety (or identity group) segments that may or may not be separated by boundaries. This cohesion would point to the repertoire as more of a meshing (Young 2011), presupposing that linguistic features do not randomly exist within a repertoire but may perhaps be coalesced into larger groups from which they are sourced (identity-based speech communities). These

identities could theoretically exist side by side within a single repertoire and be divided by porous (or at least non-fixed) walls/boundaries allowing for the movement of features across boundaries. This would make phenomena such as linguistic crossing and borrowings much more feasible facilitating the use of intraspeaker variation for the linguistic individual (Johnstone 1996).

I would extend this hypothesis by arguing that not only are identities interlocking, but that the spaces where they intersect are permeable boundaries that facilitate the transfer of resources and where they begin to shape and inform one another. The boundary where Black meets Gay is not one that is fixed but is the ground zero for where the two merge and influence each other, allowing the passage of features to occur. With this in mind the proposed boundaries where one identity ends and another begins, though fuzzy, might be a crucial place to begin our observation of intersectional identities. Theoretically, no speaker has a single faceted identity as there are multiple elements of self, so this wouldn't necessarily be contingent upon being a member of a marginalized community. I would argue the repertoire to apply to any speaker who has more than one identity group membership (by default, any human arguably). If anything would affect this, I would hypothesize that it would be the potential for conflict between the identities (lending a multiplex nature). If all identities are completely aligned, one could argue that there is no need to shift, either they share the sam universal language among them or all resources are readily available at all times.

Further, based on his ability to move back and forth with ease, I would argue that the repertoire is not just a bricolage as in different pieces randomly combined, but that the

barriers between these pieces are porous and blurred allowing for transmission of elements. These boundaries, however, are not strict and allow the varieties to combine into a whole, cohesive repertoire which, itself shifts to prioritize that which needs to be highlighted during moments of identity construction. Because Dan is exercising agency over his repertoire, it may be more logical to state that it is not he who is doing the shifting but that the repertoire itself is able to be shifted by Dan during these moments. I would argue that elements don't just move across boundaries, but that the repertoire itself shifts as speakers shift their orientations. By shifting I mean that the entire repertoire itself (assuming that it is organized by linguistic varieties which house features) has the ability to move in order to place particular varieties at the forefront, to facilitate intraspeaker variation. Thus, if a the variety were imagined as a single disc apportioned into three major sections (AAL, GMS, WL respectively), the disc itself would have the ability to rotate, prioritizing whichever variety most appropriate for the purpose and circumstances of conversation. Like Gumperz and Benor, the repertoires are made up various features and elements which assemble into a unit. My approach, however allows for an organization of said features by associated varieties and allows for those features to move beyond their varieties as crossovers. In addition, my repertoire theory allows the repertoire itself to move (or shift) in order to prioritize the most relevant variety in moments of talk. Dan needed to prioritize his identity memberships situationally and his linguistic variation reflects that need. If we postulate that his identity repertoire itself is moving, a similar claim could be made for the linguistic repertoire as well.

If elements which exist within a repertoire can cross over into one another and mesh, how are linguistic labels and essentialism impacted? If a feature has multiple associations (for instance, nasal fronting could be AAL or Southern English), how can we determine to which linguistic variety or speech community it belongs? And to what extent are these determinations challenging or reproducing the essential categories from which they stem?

In the next (and final analysis) chapter, I seek to tackle these questions by addressing the repertoires of identity and language as wholly constructed systems from which Dan draws with full agency to enact his identity through performance. Particularly, I examine what it looks like to enact identity via language, particularly focusing on Speech Act Theory (Austin 1962), the role of performativity in the construction of the self, and what it looks like to enact a multiplex identity, transcending labels and boundaries both linguistic and social. These examinations will hopefully lead to a means of not only observing identity construction via language but a more thorough understanding of the relationship between the two.

CHAPTER 6
"I'M DOIN' ME": THE PERFORMATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF A MULTIPLEX IDENTITY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

> "Another reason we try and create impressions of ourselves in the minds of others is to construct a particular identity for ourselves" (Jonathon D. Brown, *The Self*)

If power and positioning are catalysts of the identity construct, then community memberships, formed based on history and power, would serve as the intermediary -- the space where one learns to perform the identity by using the provided resources. Established identity groups and memberships provide the means by which speakers can not only index membership but enact these identities as socially constructed. We draw on socially constructed mores which inform how we understand and prescribe how we function in the world around us. By drawing on these narratives, we act and thus enact the construct bringing it to life. Each time this process is done, we solidify the construct as a reality. In this chapter, I examine that which moves the construct beyond the abstract as it becomes realized via action.

I have argued that the structure of the linguistic repertoire is a singular unit composed of linguistic varieties with porous boundaries between them. These boundaries allow for features which may exist in more than one variety to transcend the groups with

which they are associated and blur these partitions. Said blurring allows for a melange (or bricolage Gumperz 1964; Benor 2008, 2010) of features, speech acts, varieties, and discursive moves that are reminiscent of discourse (e.g. the broad treatment of language as conversational). While the first two analysis chapters examined language in terms of features and varieties, this chapter addresses language beyond individual labels as discourse, focusing on the complexity of the linguistic repertoire. Because there is such a multiplicity of linguistic forms within a single repertoire, in this chapter, I draw on the term discourse opting for the approach of Discourse Analysis (DA) which looks beyond text towards the broader social contexts which inform and are embedded in Dan's speech as I examine its performative nature. I believe that it is there (within discourse) that intraspeaker variation can be best observed. The focus of this chapter is the use of the repertoire as a means of enacting the identity. It is intended to be an up-close examination of intraspeaker variation in action with discourse being defined as the resulting product.

In this chapter, I explore Dan's use of his linguistic repertoire to construct his repertoire of identity as a Gay Black male. Like his linguistic repertoire, Dan's repertoire of identity is composed of multiple identity groups, notably including identities of gender, sexuality, and race, which, I argue, come together to create a cohesive multiplex unit. Much like my focus on language as discourse, in this chapter, I shift my treatment of identity towards the self, defining it as the habitual, uniquely complex, and agentive manifestation of an inward sense and imagined as a single, cohesive entity which exists beyond labels, group memberships, and macro social categories. This does not mean that I

am rejecting the use of labels as points of reference. I will simply not limit the discussion to the strict confines of labels, opting instead to move beyond them.

I argue that the self is not just a composition of elements to be possessed. It is the repertoire of these things deliberately put into action. The behaviors are how the constructs of gender, sexuality, and race are brought to life. That which we do with the resources at our disposal becomes our behavior and eventually the self. From this viewpoint, identity can be treated as a much more personal, conscious, deliberate effort of enacting the self via speech as action done by a speaker for the sake of demonstrating/displaying one's sense of identity for an audience (a process which Erving Goffman refers to as "impression management").

Erving Goffman's invaluable work (1959) acknowledges identity as (inter)actively forged through social interaction taking into account the impact of social norms particularly as one of the motives for self-presentation. Goffman's work is one of the earliest to address identity as a social construct which is forged by action, pointing to a type of agency held by social actors as they construct their identities, a concept I would like to highlight in this chapter. In this instance, the definition of agency must be made clear. Drawing on Butler (1990), larger institutional and cultural influences are in some way inescapable regardless of choices, so one must analyze a speaker's sense of agency within the confines of the broader reality. Returning to the social aspect of constructivism, speakers must take into consideration others unless they live an existence of complete isolation. In such a case, one could have almost total autonomy of their sense of identity. This scenario would lead us down the rabbit hole of whether or not isolation is even pos-

sible and thus, whether one could ever truly hold full agency. Said discussion is beyond the scope of this work, but it is valuable in the clarification of a speaker's agency. When using the term, I am referring to the liberties (and resistance) that speakers may take in relation to the broader structures within which they may exist. This varies for everyone and arguably at different times for a single person. Agency may look different for a speaker who is at work vs. at the grocery store. These limitations should not go ignored, particularly in terms of self-construction.

> "The appearance of substance is precisely that, a constructed identity, a performa tive accomplishment which the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in the mode of belief" (*Gender Trouble*, 1990)

Judith Butler defines gender as "the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts…that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (1990, 33). Making a clear distinction between the constructed and essentialized, Butler introduces performance as fundamental to the construction of the self. She examines why more than essentialism and labels are crucial to identity. Building on DeBeauvoir's claim, Butler tackles constructed identity head-on addressing gender, particularly womanhood, as "a becoming…an ongoing discursive practice" (1990, 33). She directly refers to gender as "a constructing" positing that it is not only socially enacted, but a process which is ongoing and repetitive, with unclear beginnings and endings, citing it as "not expressive but performative" (1990, 141). Performance, then could be considered the manifestation of the self, the postmodern stage where a sign becomes reality. In short, the face (Brown and Levinson 1987). In this sense, performativity is the doing process, the actual construction of the self. These performances are reflective of the micro

level creation of identity for the linguistic individual. As performance brings constructs to life and as it could be viewed as the space where a speaker has the most autonomy (i.e., without need to navigate larger power systems or deal with community policing) it may serve as the ideal space to reproduce and/or complicate identity as a construct beyond tropes and stereotypes (cf. anti-essentialism).

Butler's seminal work is applied to gender but translates seamlessly to sexuality, given her analysis of gender as performativity being couched within the heteronormative structure which created it. Butler's work focused largely on the construction of gender but has been drawn on heavily to explore the linguistic construction of sexuality by Thomas Milani (2019) as well as identity at the cross-section of gender and sexuality by Livia and Hall (1997). Butler's invaluable work gets to the heart of the "desire vs. identity" question, a recurring theme within the study of Language and Sexuality.

Though the specific language of performativity is not always used, I would be remiss not to address the ways in which AAL research has contributed greatly to the discussion of Black performativity via description of the ways in which "Talking Black" is the essence of forging a Black identity via speech, yielding countless speech acts and serving as a speech act in and of itself. In regards to "Talking Black," whether for those who are "down" or those who are "wannabes" attempting to draw on Blackness as cool capital, the broader discussion has always been centered around the ways in which Black speech (as performance) is indelibly linked to Black identity.

Performativity has been explored from a number of perspectives, lending credence to its usefulness in the examination of identity as socially constructed. Charles

Briggs' (1988) work helped construct a framework, through the expansion of that which already exists, for the evaluation of competence in verbal art performances gaining a better understanding of the nature of verbal art (particularly Mexicano performances). Briggs also evaluated multiple types of speech events (scriptural allusions, anecdotes, and legends) as performances and analyzed the aforementioned features and cultural mores that validate these events and the legitimacy of their speakers. Stanton Wortham (2003) focused on the construction and enactment of personhood via the personal narratives of a woman named Jane as were elicited in an interview. Wortham's focus was geared more towards the construction of personal identity through narratives and how the self is enacted via positioning, showing its constructive use as a means of demonstrating the emergent self when presenting narratives to others.

The concept of performativity likely finds its roots in linguistics, being frequently attributed to J.L. Austin's *How to do Things with Words* (1962), which laid the groundwork for Speech Act Theory. By approaching language as more than face-value utterances, Austin introduced the concept of speech as having the capacity to do instead of solely being heard giving way to performative utterances. Speech is a volitional act as the pronouncement of locutionary force. The study of speech acts focuses largely on particular words and phrases that bring about an action or result due to their mere utterance. For example, the expression "I now pronounce you husband and wife" is a phrase which, when uttered by an ordained speaker enacts and solidifies the union of two participants and the conclusion of a marriage ceremony.

The notion of force is largely associated with Gottlob Frege's (1918) work but was extended by the work of J.L. Austin (1962). Austin described the Locutionary act as the literal act of saying, the pronunciation of words or the utterance of speech. Illocutionary force is the act which is performed when speaking, that which is accomplished by the utterance. In such an instance, a speaker is not merely uttering, they are doing something by speaking. Their speech functions as an act and is thus referred to as a speech act. Finally, perlocutionary is the force of the act performed by speaking. An interlocutor may well hear and understand the illocutionary act, but this does not mean that they will respond to it. Perlocutionary force then takes the illocutionary act a step further by demonstrating the effect/intended goal of the illocutionary act. If an illocutionary act is "you may now kiss the bride," its goal is to do more than inform, it is to permit. The perlocutionary force of said speech act would be the hearers engaging in the act of kissing, the resulting impact of the illocutionary act.

Based on this, one could make the argument that all speech is uttered with an intended effect or result in mind, be it to inform, declare, demand, command, or proclaim. Just as the waves of sound impact a listener's ears, speech yields effect. That said, it could be claimed that all speech, in the most broad sense could be considered a form of action with observable effects (effects that will be the focus of my analysis). I will observe Dan's speech as action along with the content (possible intentions or readings), the broader social ramifications that he reproduces or challenges, the consequences in the moment, and the response of his interlocutors. Following Austin's work, I argue that our utterances do much more than simply inform as statements. However, I push this ap-

proach even further arguing that utterances have a designated purpose according to the speaker and an effect regardless of intent. To give a command, despite a speaker's intent, will almost never bear the effects of thanking someone. That said, though the purpose of speech may be clear, speaker's agency and nuance may complicate and expand the effect of speech (for example, the seeming command "you betta werk!" Bearing the effect of a compliment). From the standpoint of effect and agency, discourse (Dan's use of his linguistic repertoire) could be considered an action, or rather a series of actions, and thus symbolic of his identity performance. Speech designed to express identity could be considered a speech act and could theoretically serve to bring the self to fruition upon being pronounced. If we take up the narrative that identity is performative (i.e., done via action) in conjunction with the theory that speaking can be a performative action, one could argue that by speaking about his identity, Dan could be actively constructing it as well, interfacing language and the self.

One of the major merits of discourse analysis is its treatment of speech as action (Malinowski 1997) and its focus on the impact of speech beyond simple utterances. Barbara Johnstone (2008) does an extraordinary job of highlighting the significance of discourse as a means of doing things in the world. Among many poignant arguments, she brings attention to the cyclical relationship between language and reality by demonstrating how discourse is shaped by and in turn, shapes the world through socially constructed experiences (2008, 73). As she eloquently put it, "People bring worlds into being by talking" (2008, 33), specifically via discourse.

Drawing on Butler's performativity alongside Speech Act Theory, this chapter analyzes the ways in which Dan brings his constructed repertoire of identity to fruition through discourse. As a performance is unique to the performer it has as much to do with his agency as it does with having to adapt to outside forces and audience design (negotiation and maintenance). Butler's work challenges the reality of what we understand identity to be and while I fully adopt her approach to identity as constructed, my focus will bring up the question of agency. Yes, gender (and identity) is the result of arbitrary prescriptions rooted in power (institutional and social) that are foisted upon our bodies, but what happens when a speaker becomes aware of this "reality" and actively defies it or embraces it with his own flair? Can a speaker actually adopt the illusory construct that has been assigned to him or is he trapped between the construct and a complete absence of identity? And is this the same feeble identity that is the result of systemic oppression or something else entirely? This final chapter is concerned with observing the ways in which Dan "does him" (as described below) by enacting his own sense of self with agency and awareness as he acknowledges the performative nature of his own constructed identity in metalinguistic commentary, takes them up, and ultimately challenges (complicates) their limitations.

6.2 "I'M DOIN' ME": SPEECH as ACTION of the self

> "The use of language is thus not the disembodied exercise of human reason asserting neutral facts about the world. It is a situated, contextual act in a network of social roles and responsibilities. " -Nick Riemer, *Introducing Semantics*

"Doing me" is an AAL phrase that has become so common, that it is easily translated into the broader Mainstream culture. From popular songs to internet memes, the

term has become a modern-day replacement for and synonymous with the directive “be yourself!” But it takes on another layer drawing on the aspect of identity which is performative and deliberate. To say in AAL, “Do you, Boo!” is not only to encourage the hearer to be their true self but it is indicative of a sense of agency the hearer is granted, a permission of sorts to actually embrace their identity fully and actively display it. That said, it should be noted that, like many AAL phrases, “do you" can have multiple, layered meanings, also serving as “shade” (or an indirect insult) depending on the context. Either way, the performative nature of identity maintains its significance. This section will explore the performative aspect of identity as that which is constructed with identity group sourced materials. The following clip explores the ways in which Dan has sourced his sense of self from his community memberships and the implications for his performance.

Transcript 6.1 “Talking Black” (Kelsey- BiBF)

In the first Transcript, Dan and Kelsey (BiBF) discuss what it means to talk one’s race (Alim et al. 2016), particularly the experience of “Talking Black." The metalinguistic commentary begins as centered around code-switching but quickly turns to the effects that come with the use of AAL. Displaying an awareness of the performative nature of language, Dan and Kelsey comment on the ability of the mere act of speaking in AAL to bring about consequences closely tied to racism as speakers are motivated by linguistic discrimination and audience design. In this interaction, Dan aligns towards Kelsey in solidarity (Lines 643 and 651). Dan and Kelsey address the tendency for all speakers to “code-switch” for the sake of social adaptation. Yet they do not take up the broader narrative which deems AAL inferior or illegitimate within the Mainstream. Quite the contrary,

as they progress to the acceptance and embracing of Talking Black as linked to their racial identity and heritage, they laud it as something to celebrate (Lines 672-675), an ancestral connection, and a source of pride for AAL speakers.

Exchange #3	**@14 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
635	Dan	And then what role does language play in acting one's race.
636	Kelsey	Ooooooh
637		And that whole like
638		Talking Black thing
639		Um (2.0) h ((teeth suck))
640		h I guess that's a
641		Really has to do with stereotypes and what people
642		Like think you should be talking like
643	Dan	**Mhm**
644	Kelsey	So I mean (.)
645		With language
646		It's a thing you can
647		It's it's difficult cause it's a thing you can code switch
648		you can turn on and turn it off
649		Like I'll be talkin' to you
650		And like I'll ***be*** talkin' to you
651	Dan	**Yeah**
652	Kelsey	Right there
653	Dan	Yeah @@
654	Kelsey	Okay yup
655		But like if I see a professor

Exchange #3	**@14 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
656		"hi professor how are you =goo:d"
657	Dan	=Uuummm
658	Kelsey	Code switch
659		so like
660		And then th- we wanna say like
661		**Oh you're acting White because**
662		You're speaking proper and all this
663		Other stuff
664		But like
665		It's an an adaptation
666	Kelsey	Like everyone does it
667	Dan	Yeah
668	Kelsey	**It'**s not it's not jus- Black people who have this like
669		certain sense of like talking
670		Or certain language
671	Dan	Yeah
672	Kelsey	so like **Is** not jus-
673		**Is** not **jus**- solidified to just Black people
674		So people say you're ***talking Black***
675		Or your broken English like
676	Dan	Mhm
677	Kelsey	Okay your h-
678		Your history and ancestors had sumin too
679		That you just don't have it

Exchange #3	**@14 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
680		Because you're just american now like
681	Dan	@
682	Kelsey	You wish you could talk like like me
683	Dan	@@
684	Kelsey	@you don't have this in your culture **like**
685	Dan	Mhm
686	Kelsey	You're jealous

Taking into consideration previous literature which associates "Talkin Proper" with AAL (Mitchell-Kernan 1971; Hoover 1978), and accounting for the varying speaker intuitions, I acknowledge that Talking Proper could be considered part of AAL by some. However, in this study I draw on the discourse of Kelsey and Dan in my definition. Based on their discussion, the two treat it as MAE based on the presumption of "acting White" projected onto speakers who talk Proper. In addition, this treatment of Talking Proper is in keeping with current literature on the topic (Weldon 2018). Talking Proper is often referred to as one's "telephone voice" and is often marked (the speech act of being remarked upon via repetition) as inauthentic. Talking proper is often associated with "overt prestige" (Trudgill 1972) via class distinction, bringing power to the fore as a catalyst for the presentation of the self. It is not unheard of for "Talking proper" to be treated as a Black interpretation of Whiteness or as performing professionally, an approach which would conflate the "telephone voice with one's "White voice."

As Dan aligns himself with Kelsey (and AAL speakers) via supportive minimal responses, he legitimizes the right to use whatever language variety one desires, in turn solidifying his own sense of Blackness. What is interesting about this clip is that it addresses speech as action, more specifically speech as equated with doing identity (Line 661). The assumption that Talking Proper is equivalent to acting White has far reaching assumptions not only about race, but about the associations of speech with the enactment of identity.

Transcript 6.2 Acting Gay as Talking Gay (Marc- BiWM)

In another metalinguistic discussion, Dan is speaking with Marc (BiWM) about GMS and the role that "sound" plays in invoking and performing Gay identity. Here, he equates speaking with the act of being Gay, exploring the connection between language as a means of doing a sexualized identity.

Exchange # 2	**@38 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1163	Dan	yeah for me it was just acting Gay-
1164		well I **guess** a big
1165		part of it was just like sounding Gay
1166		**like** talking Gay
1167		so it was just more
1168		it's also the- **I guess** the high pitched voice?
1169		but I **mean not every Gay person has that**
1170		but then on top of that
1171		it was just

Exchange # 2	**@38 min.**
Line	**Speaker**
1172	I dunno I felt like there's **like**
1173	subtle intonations in the way that
1174	**Gay people** say certain things
1175	**like** I cant really put my finger on it
1176	**like** exactly what they are
1177	but it's just **like** this universal sound
1178	that all or that many Gay people have
1179	it's just (.) really easy to spot I **guess**

As Dan shares his experience, his commentary about the role of "sounding Gay" lends credence to the performative aspect of speech as well as the identity vs. desire debate within the field of Language and Sexuality. While he does not ostracize himself from the Gay men to which he alludes in Line 1174, his use of neutral language almost as a removed observer of GMS does not give off the assumption of self-inclusion. Interestingly enough however, as he comments on GMS, he employs it with not only associated features such as hedges (Lines 1175-79) but also through his discourse and topic as he Queers his language (Leap 1991, 1996a).

Transcript 6.3 Performing Gender (Marc- BiWM)

Below is another example of Dan's awareness of identity as constructed via performance. Dan discusses how he has viewed his identity as sourced from his community group memberships, more specifically, his familial community, particularly in regards to

his gender. In the case of gender, Dan expresses the role that playing sports and dressing dolls have had in the expectations of his gender identity performance.

Exchange #2	**@ 28 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
831	Dan	yeah for me personally it's just like
832		I got I dunno where Igot the behaviors or where I learned them from?
833		I probably just learned them from my parents or
834		just watching that my dad wears that
835		or my dad wears this
836		and it's just like I got those
837		but then when I turned a certain age
838		I was like I don't really like these anymore
839	Marc	mhm
840	Dan	it was just like the pants I wore like
841		I preferred skinny jeans or the shorts I wore
842		I preferred to wear shorts and it's just
843		not things that I agreed with so I just changed them
844		and I just feel more comfortable now
845		because I actually
846		like the stuff that I wear
847		like the stuff that I actually do and me like
848		sometimes motioning with my hands and
849		raising my voice to a higher pitch when I'm around like certain people
850		it's just something that I do when I feel more comfortable
851	Marc	yeah

Exchange #2	**@ 28 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
852	Dan	just doing it

Dan and Marc discuss identity behaviors and their source. Dan explores how he believes he sourced his identity behaviors from his family and overtime began to pick and choose what to incorporate into his repertoire of self. These choices came with a lot of rejections of that which he did not accept and embracing of that which he did. I speak of these as choices as Dan speaks from the perspective of one with autonomy during this process of selection. The combination of agency and embracing "that which is" appears to function as a healthy balance when exploring identity performance, leaving space for discussion of performativity of identity beyond tropes, but with deliberation. This conversation begins to approach the discussion of identity shifting and intraspeaker variation as Marc synthesizes the discussion by arguing that we all adjust based on who we speak with and adapt accordingly. Both Transcripts 6.2 and 6.3 highlight Dan's awareness of identity as performative, making space for him to demonstrate the ways in which he forges his own identity via interactive discourse.

Transcript 6.4 "Doll Wars" (Marc- BiWM)

In Doll Wars, Dan talks about his childhood love of fashion and wanting to play with his sister. He recalls the experience of having something he genuinely enjoyed taken away from him, hypothesizing that his parents believed it would make him Gay. This narrative draws on the stereotype of Gay men as flamboyant and feminine. Elsewhere in the

interview, Dan also speaks about his father's desire for him to play sports and be around boys. Drawing on stereotypes of gender performance as indexical of sexuality, the trope of a flamboyant Gay male is invoked, thus causing harm to Dan and reproducing an inaccurate and deeply problematic narrative. These tropes are rarely rooted in sound logic, but more often dangerous ideology about what is and is not culturally legitimized. In turn, these beliefs make space for the reproduction of mistreatment and violence against members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Exchange #2	**@ 12:30 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
361	Dan	ah no I di-
362		I never wanted to be a girl
363		well (.) no I just had a lot of friends that were girls
364		that kinda shaped like
365		Oh I wanna be like them
366		I wanna do all the stuff because
367		I remember this one time
368		I was with my sister
369		and then we were playing a game online called "Doll Wars"?
370		and it was just like a game where you like
371		dress girls up and you put them against other girls
372		and they had like different outfits
373		and the person with the highest number of votes
374		they won
375		and I was playing that game
376		with my sister

Exchange #2	**@ 12:30 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
377		and then my parents came in and they saw
378		and they were like
379		“Oh. You can’t play that game. You’re a boy.”
380		and they were like- they kinda like
381		shut the computer down
382		and like I couldn’t play it at all
383	Marc	hm
384	Dan	so I was just like
385		oh okay
386		I kinda wanted to be a girl because
387		like—
388		and just have the same things that they do
389		it was just kind of a blah experience for me

Dan explains to Marc the struggle with wanting to live his life outside of the strict parameters of masculinity as a child. He begins his narrative by clarifying that he never wanted to change his sex, nor did he want to adopt the female gender as performative. He asserts that he only wanted to participate in behaviors that have been gendered by a heteronormative society. In this moment, Dan challenges the social conflation of sex with performative gender. He later goes on to challenge the heteronormative assumption of gender as being directly tied to sexual identity as he voices his parents (and ultimately the broader society) in Line 379. Calling out the narrowmindedness of his parents and society

indicates an agency that is critical for the enactment of the self and, in doing so, Dan legitimizes his identity as an act of resistance against heteronormative assumptions. He boldly demonstrates and defends his identity (as well as those of others) as a Gay male who is not limited to a single faceted sense of self or stereotype. This Transcript is crucial to Dan's demonstration of an awareness of the performativity of gender as well as the false limitations it presents. Dan knows that these constructs are at least bendable and at most false, making space for him to behave as an agent and do with the constructs as he wishes, to include defiance.

6.3 "CATEGORIZE ME, I DEFY EVERY LABEL!"

-"What's the nastiest shade you've ever thrown?"
-"Existing in the world."
-Juliana Huxtable

I came across the above quote in an online gif of Juliana Huxtable a Black trans woman. It truly felt like the embodiment of what it means to hold an intersectional identity in a society which has yet to move beyond labels. LGBTQ+ people of color commonly report feeling disconnected from or ostracized by the Black community. On the other hand, queer people of color are still trying to carve out a place for themselves within the LGBTQ+ community, often finding safety in small pockets of subcultures forming community amongst themselves. This issue is not limited to POC (People of Color) or the LGBTQ+ community. Many Black women are still attempting to legitimize their voices and rights within the Black community as well as feminist movements. To be complex, is to be without a strict label. The reality is that everyone is complex and holds multiple identity memberships. It is just that those whose identities are legitimized have their

memberships marked as “norm” and then classified as the standard. Straight Black men hold multiple identity group memberships just as anyone else would, but because Male and Straight are socially sanctioned, they are marked as the norm and the face of Black-ness essentialized. To defy labels such as these in any way, and to do so unapologetically is not just shade towards a society which refuses to legitimize members, it is a full read (i.e., an overt call out and criticism that has no regard for saving the face of the ad-dressee)!

One of the many pitfalls of essentialism is the risk of developing and recreating tropes and stereotypes. When there is only “one way to be Gay” one is left with a catch-22 -- either be your authentic self and risk being ostracized from the community or perform the sanctioned version of Gay (reinforcing a stereotype). These tropes can be not only inaccurate but harmful for the speakers and communities in which they exist.

Transcript 6.5 On Being White (Marc- BiWM)

Exchange # 2	**@9 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
245	Dan	so you reference like being kind of jealous of other people
246		having I guess cultural =foods
247		= yeah
248		even in your-
249		((unintelligible)
250		-elementary schools
251	Marc	and I think jealous is a little strong word
252	Dan	um hum

Exchange # 2	**@9 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
253		= like it's not
254		=so what would you say
255	Marc	I'd like it's kind of like jokingly
256	Dan	um hum
257	Marc	like also though my friends would tease me about all kinds of stuff
258		so like you know I was the only one had to-
259		like I would get sunburned
260	Dan	@@
261	Marc	while everybody else
262	Dan	@@@
263	Marc	um uh you know just like
264		White no rhythm
265	Dan	@@
266	Marc	kinda stuff
267		(.)
268		um uh and that was high school
269		um yeah I would say like jealous is a strong word
270		=yeah
271		=um
272		uh but it's kinda like a teasing playful thing
273		yeah just so boring
274	Dan	just neutral
275	Marc	@
276	Dan	and did that ever make you wanna change your race

Exchange # 2	**@9 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
277	Marc	um (.) I never thought of that
278	Dan	Really
279	Marc	yeah
280	Dan	Mhm
281	Marc	yeah
282		(2.0)
283		yeah I mean yeah ((lowered volume))
284		why not
285		it was just another thing where
286		yeah I never its like never really thought of it
287		honestly
288	Dan	mhm
289	Marc	yeah um (.) yeah (.)
290		yeah and I guess you know
291		perhaps if I-didn't happen to be (.) of a race that's benefitted from privilege
292	Dan	mhm
293	Marc	yeah I might have you know
294		I might have thought of that
295		I Dunno @

Here, Dan and Marc discuss the trope of Whiteness as largely a type of lack or absence. The two discuss the trope in a comical manner based on stereotypes and explore the notion of envy for Marc. The two continue into the discussion of stereotypical White-

ness as lack as Dan laughs in the background. Marc makes it clear that whatever the case may be, it was not extremely grave and extends from a history of playful teasing by his peers. Though seemingly trivial, this interaction lays the groundwork for a deeper concern -- the dangers of essentializing the performative nature of identity. While the self is undoubtedly enacted, it is easy to fall into the trap of tropes and stereotypes. The next section examines the ways in which Dan navigates this pitfall via agency, defiance, and a uniquely complex repertoire of identity.

Transcript 6.6 "Black expectations"/"Ratchet" (Kelsey- BiBF)

In this Transcript, Dan speaks with Kelsey about the need to navigate stereotypical expectations that are racially based.

Exchange #3	**@11 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
458	Dan	Then what does it mean to like
459		Act ratchet
460		Or like act Black
461	Kelsey	((Sucks teeth))
462		It's jus- means oh
463	Dan	@@
464	Kelsey	@@@@
465		Oooh um
466		It's just it means that you're
467		Acting like a I guess a
468		**Stereotypical Black person which means**
469		**They're they're loud**

Exchange #3	**@11 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
470		**They they don't have manners**
471	Dan	Mhm
472	Kelsey	They like um
473		They just they (2.0)
474		ºWhat is ratchetº
475	Dan	@
476	Kelsey	Um
477		@@@
478		Theyyyyy
479		They just um
480		They don't like aspire to be anything
481	Dan	Mhm
482	Kelsey	Um they use like really derogatory language
483	Dan	Yeah
484	Kelsey	They jus- um (2.0)
485		Just like not someone you wanna be
486		Or someone you wanna be like
487	Dan	Mhm
488	Kelsey	So but I think
489		When me and my friends like
490		Ack ratchet or ack Black it's jus- like
491		it's jus- a mask you put on like
492		You n-
493		You're not ratchet

Exchange #3	**@11 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
494	Dan	Mhm
495	Kelsey	You're not the stereotypical person
496		It's jus- like
497		Having fun
498	Dan	Yeah
499	Kelsey	So
500		In that sense we ac**t** ratchet but like
501		We aren't ratchet
502		But we don't aspire to be that way
503	Dan	Mhm
504	Kelsey	Yeah
505	Dan	And is there **somethin**' wrong **wit bein**' ratchet
506		**Like**
507	Kelsey	Ooooooohhh
508	Dan	Do you think so **((teeth suck))**
509	Kelsey	ooooooooooooooo
510		@@@@
511	Dan	I jus-
512		I just feel like
513	Kelsey	Ooooh
514	Dan	If you're Black
515		**Like** you just can't act out a stereotype
516		But **like**
517		What if that's who you are

Exchange #3	**@11 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
518	Kelsey	Yeah
519	Dan	And then like a White person can be
520		All of those things it's **jus- like**
521		"Aw that's jus- them"
522	Kelsey	Right
523	Dan	"That's not like White people"
524		It's just that speci- specific person
525	Kelsey	Right
526	Dan	ºSo how do you feel about thatº
527	Kelsey	Oooooh
528		Gettin' into some juicy stuff
529	Dan	=Um
530	Kelsey	=I feel it
531		Like
532	Dan	**Some discussion here**
533	Kelsey	@@@@@@

By defying labels, one is able to neutralize tropes in two ways: through agency and authenticity. Here, Dan asks Kelsey to define "ratchet" (her word for what it means to act Black). She draws on and critiques the stereotype of ratchetness as loud people (presumably Black) who have no manners (Lines 468-70). Dan then complicates this definition by asking if there is anything wrong with acting ratchet. She considers and responds that she had not heard the term before she entered White spaces and was unclear

about what it meant as it was an unmarked normal behavior to her. Knowing fully well that this is a loaded question, they both begin to laugh and Dan sucks his teeth (Line 508). His voice then lowers in pitch, signaling a brief moment of seriousness and frustration that he has with the status quo, as he explains the right of White people to behave as they wish without risk of being stereotyped, a freedom that members of marginalized communities are not afforded. Dan's expressed frustration confronts the freedom to be White without the weight of having to represent one's entire race. Though Dan is aligned positively with his race and the enactment of his racial identity, this is clearly a demonstration of the effects of having been essentialized based on identity performance.

Transcript 6.7 "Gay expectations" (Kelsey- BiBF)

In this next Transcript Dan and Kelsey once again commune over shared expectations regarding identity. The conversation begins with Kelsey discussing the expectation to be fun and "get the party started" as a trope assigned to Black people (particularly in moments during which they happen to be tokenized by Whites). They begin by discussing Black expectations and the pressure to be entertaining for White people, a request that is reminiscent of past Sambo[19] imagery. They talk about the pressure put on them to be a specific type of Black, an image that adheres to stereotypes portrayed in the types of films produced by Tyler Perry, for example, which also placate views of a type of Blackness with which the Mainstream seems to be comfortable. To be clear, they do not say that these elements are not a part of the Black experience, they simply opine the need to

[19] Sambo is a reference to a demeaning character often portrayed in minstrel performances for White entertainment.

reproduce them as the sole means of performing Black identity, locking them into two dimensional boxes. In lines 1188-93, the discussion continues as Dan relates this experience of Blackness to being a Gay male, noting similar demands that he be funny or enjoy shopping, stereotypical attributes associated with Gay men. This is one of the shared struggles of both identity groups which overlap for GBM. In this case, Dan focuses largely on Mainstream (in this case read as White) stereotypes of Gay men such as the desire to go shopping or be funny, a trope at which Kelsey ironically chortles. Dan is indeed being funny as he discusses the expectation that he be funny and the problematic nature of stereotyping. More than this, he voices those who hold these expectations and marks them as presumably female via the use of vocal fry paired with MAE. One could argue that he is simply indexing Gay identity here as the features are shared by both identity groups, but his negative stance towards the speakers he is voicing implies a lack of in-group solidarity. Though the two laugh about the circumstances, their concerns point to very real and damaging limitations forced onto marginalized communities and reproduce dangerous power dynamics

Exchange #3	**@27 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1188	Dan	~Cause I feel like
1189		When **I tell people I'm Gay**~
1190		**Like** they all ((inaudible)) **like** this expectation like
1191		Oh I have to be **like** funny
1192		I have to **like**
1193		Wanna go shopping with them**?**

Exchange #3	**@27 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1194	Kelsey	h@@@
1195	Dan	And it's jus- like
1196		It's so =unreasonable
1197	Kelsey	=@@
1198	Dan	There's just so many
1199	Kelsey	Right right
1200	Dan	Jus unnecessary
1201		I feel like
1202	Kelsey	Right you have to do this that and the other
1203		Like
1204	Dan	it's like **I have other interests**
1205	Kelsey	h@
1206	Dan	I g- I do other things like
1207		I do plenty of other things in my life
1208		Besides that
1209		And it's just always like
1210		Why that first question would be like oh
1211		"Oh **like** do you wanna **go shopping."**
1212		Or **like** why that's like a very big thing
1213	Kelsey	Right
1214	Dan	To like some people
1215		Is jus- it's **weird** to me
1216	Kelsey	@@@
1217	Dan	**An' like** (1.0) I dunno

Exchange #3	**@27 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1218		do you have that same experience
1219		When when like you're around White people
1220	Kelsey	Yeah
1221	Dan	And like you're Black
1222		And is jus- like
1223		They want you to do certain things**?**
1224		**Like** can you **like** tell me
1225	Kelsey	Sure
1226		So like
1227		I went to school with all White people
1228		There was like 8 Black people
1229		Outta like a hundred and somethi**n'**
1230	Dan	Mhm
1231	Kelsey	So like
1232		I was **like** basically middle school and high school
1233		I was **like** the token Black person
1234		Like everyone invited me
1235		so the "party could get started" like
1236	Dan	Oh
1237	Kelsey	So like we could dance and ***turn up***
1238	Dan	Yeah
1239	Kelsey	Be lit and all this other stuff
1240		So like "ooh Kelsey dance"
1241		"Oooh Kelsey this"

Exchange #3	**@27 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1242		Like monkey go go go =like
1243	Dan	=Uh huh
1244	Kelsey	So like
1245		Um I think like as a Black person
1246		They jus- expect me to jus- be
1247		Be loud be funny
1248	Kelsey	Be always like
1249	Dan	Yeah
1250	Kelsey	upbeat
1251	Dan	Yeah
1252	Kelsey	***Waaaahh***
1253		And I'm jus- like
1254		((outbreath)) Actually I'm introverted like
1255		I **don't be** playi**n' witchall**
1256	Dan	@@
1257	Kelsey	@@@
1258	Dan	It's l**ike** I'm tired
1259	Kelsey	Right like I'm just like you gotta recharge
1260		The energizer bunny like
1261	Dan	@@@
1262	Kelsey	h@ I'm not like this all the time
1263	Dan	Uh huh
1264	Kelsey	So like
1265		I feel like

Exchange #3	**@27 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1266		Just cause I- I'm Black
1267		I'm s'posed to have like
1268		The like all these great ***foods***
1269		And I'm jus s'posed to like
1270		I dunno
1271		Just White people's perspective just **be** like
1272		You **jus- be** like face palm
1273		Like
1274	Dan	These expectations
1275	Kelsey	Right @@
1276	Dan	((inaudible))
1277	Kelsey	Like so high
1278		What are you s'posed to do man
1279	Dan	Right and it's always-
1280	Kelsey	@@@
1281	Dan	**They bring nothing to the table**
1282		But they want all this
1283		They want a funny exciting danceable like
1284	Kelsey	Right
1285		What are you s'posed to do
1286		They're like
1287		"Ooooh you're having a family reunion
1288		Just like Madea**?"**
1289		I was like

Exchange #3	**@27 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1290		Yoooooo
1291	Dan	@@@
1292	Kelsey	@@please stop @@
1293	Dan	@Mhm

Dan leads the discussion by establishing his membership within the Gay community (Line 1189). He then quickly challenges the tropes via expectations that have been foisted upon him by Straight people. Again, the frustration with being essentialized and confined based on a single de facto identity takes the fore of the conversation. However, Dan navigates it well as he demonstrates his own complex identity and varied interests (Line 1204) and places the issue back into the laps of Straight people, othering them as the "weird" ones (Lines 1214-15). As if this were not enough, Dan doubles down by reading both dominant parties in question (Straight and White people), calling out their mediocrity and basicness (Lines 1281), drawing on the neutrality of Whiteness as a type of lack as mentioned in Transcript 6.2.

Transcript 6.8 "Ratchet" (Cody- SBM)

In this second Transcript about performing Race as ratchetness, Dan discusses racial stereotypes with Cody (SBM) and the impact they have on one's existence. As he did with Kelsey, Dan laments the ability for White people to behave in whichever manner they choose without the entire race being implicated and, particularly, to be able to do so and be seen as their authentic selves without judgement. Here, as Dan and Cody discuss

the irrationality of racism and prejudice, the conversation progresses as Cody remarks on the proclivity of some African-Americans to behave in a manner he refers to as *ratchet*. He explicitly uses the pronoun "they," distancing himself from these people as he takes a negative stance towards ratchet behavior, referring to it as acting out. Despite his typical use of AAL during this exchange, as he "corrects" himself from saying "there's nothin' wrong" to "nothing's wrong with that" distinctively avoiding the use of nasal fronting and employing MAE, it is clear that he marks this type of Black performance as one to which he does not wish to align himself, contrary to the content of his assertion that nothing is wrong with being ratchet. He attempts to explain his position by invoking a common fear of being racially stereotyped, saying "everyone's not like that." Dan employs minimal responses as he allows Cody to finish. He then shares his own narrative of experiencing a White person behave in a belligerent manner in a library, to which no one in the library responded. Both parties express the shared belief that had this person been Black, she most certainly would have been silenced and judged instead.

Exchange #5	**@7 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
263	Dan	Oh okay @@
264		Well
265		**Oof** have you ever been told that **chu** act uh
266		That chu act your race and what do you think this means
267	Cody	(2.0) so when people say that
268		They usually reference to ratchet?
269	Dan	Mhm

Exchange #5	**@7 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
270	Cody	But um (2.0) I will say uhh
271		Sometimes (1.0) African-American people can be loud
272		And kinda like
273		wanna be seen maybe
274		Or (.)
275		you know
276		they may w- ack out in certain ways
277	Dan	Mhm
278	Cody	You know but that's that's
279		Nothin**g**'s wrong with that
280		Cause
281	Dan	=Yeah
282	Cody	=Even in other races they do **dat**
283		But the- they associate **dat wit** bein Black like
284	Dan	Mhm
285	Cody	They're gonna be loud
286		They're gonna be
287		You know bitchy
288		And all that type stuff
289	Dan	ºYeahº
290	Cody	But to be honest
291		It jus-
292		Everybody**'s** not like that
293	Dan	Mhm

Exchange #5	**@7 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
294	Cody	Maybe ºthe girlsº but
295	Dan	@alr@ght ^@
296		Uh cause **like** I remember I was in the library
297		And then um there was this **like** person
298		**like** on her phone
299		**Like** Talking
300		**like** extremely loud
301		**Like** on her phone
302		In the **libary** where we're supposed to be quiet
303		And like doi**ng** homework
304		But she was White
305		**like** nobody was sayi**n'** anythi**ng**
306		And I was jus-
307		I jus felt **kinda** like weird
308		**Cause like** if that was a Black =woman
309	Cody	=M Exactly
310	Dan	**Like** people **woulda** been like
311		**"Hey" you know**
312		**"please quiet down miss"**
313		^But **iono cause** she was White
314		Everybody was just like
315		"Oh this isn't a library =anymore"
316	Cody	=And das dat
317		Das dat privilege part

Exchange #5	**@7 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
318	Dan	Yeah
319	Cody	That’s why
320		she’s White
321		she can do dat
322	Dan	Yeah
323	Cody	dey look over it
324		But if that was us
325		dey would prolly say she’s ackin’ ha race
326	Dan	Mhm
327	Cody	I mean
328	Dan	But yeah
329		And then in your-
330		Huh?
331	Cody	Oh I just said it’s messed up
332	Dan	Yeah
333	Cody	They didn’t tell her be quiet
334	Dan	((outbreath)) Yeah I prolly sh-
335		I feel like I **shoulda** said **somein’**
336		**But-**
337	Cody	**-**you should have
338	Dan	Uh I just put on my headphones and
339	Cody	@
340	Dan	Kinda had the over the ear ones
341	Cody	But see that could be a problem too

Exchange #5	**@7 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
342		Cause we don’t address it
343		and we don’t attack it head on
344	Dan	Mhm
345	Cody	So that’s a problem
346	Dan	yeah
347	Cody	Like we see it
348		But nobody really **say** anything
349	Dan	Mhm
350		But I just feel like
351		That shouldn’t just be a problem for White people-
352		Or that shouldn’t just be a problem for Black people
353		It should be a problem for White people too
354		**Cause like**
355		why do we always have to have the responsibility of like
356		stopping racism
357		Why can’t White peop-
358		White people call
359		So **why can’t they stop it**, you know
360	Cody	True
361	Dan	It’s jus
362		**It’s tirin to me**

In this exchange, Dan’s narrative makes space for an interesting discussion of the social pressures to police other Black people when they are being "too ratchet." Dan’s

familiar frustration with said societal mandate is shown as he voices White people, othering them (Lines 310-15). He briefly takes on the guilt of not having called out the White woman who was disorderly but quickly rejects this guilt, absolving himself of not having perpetuated the assumption that it was his duty to correct the injustice. This came in the form of a call out from Cody which Dan quickly challenged (Lines 353-359) by calling White people out (and to action) to police themselves as Black people are expected to.

As social constructs require interaction, it must be reiterated that social norms are corporately agreed upon by communities as well as interactively constructed. This necessitates a need to be enacted via a means of construction which is also rooted in social mores (group memberships) and agreed upon behaviors. Awareness of these norms and the means by which identity is constructed implies a sense of agency by the performer. In fact, the argument could be made that performance is essential to the agency of the self. Performance brings constructs to life and can serve as a critical site that allows for the uptake and complication of identity beyond tropes and stereotypes (anti-essentialism), allowing a speaker control over their own identity narrative.

Transcript 6.9 "In a box" (Cody- SBM)

In this next exchange, Dan discusses with Cody being "put in a box." He makes a cogent point about identity as self-defined and considers the need to allow others to establish who they are, granting them agency in their own self construction. This is a power in and of itself that is too often stripped from marginalized people as they are told who, what, and how to be. For communities which have been stripped of their identities, this is an especially important tool as one is able to recreate a sense of self with the only thing at

their disposal. To embrace a trope, flip it on its head and find beauty and value in a reality which was once distorted in order to devalue a people is a mark of strength, and is common within the Black community, surfacing in the speech acts of Marking and Toasting. For example, Black people now jest and brag about having large lips, the very ones that non-Black pop icons such as the Kardashians have paid for and used as social currency. In this brief exchange, Dan and Cody discuss identity and the dangers of labels. Dan argues that we should allow people to define themselves on their own terms. Based on these linguistic features, one could infer that he is speaking particularly with regards to identities of gender and sexuality, as these are the related features that surface as more salient in the moment.

Exchange # 5	**@28 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1230	Dan	Yeah
1231		I agree with that
1232		Cause **is** like **iono**
1233		We shouldn't **like**
1234		Put someone else into a box
1235		We should allow them to
1236		define **like** themselves **like**
1237		For themselves and through themselves
1238		Instead of someone like external like
1239		To their own body and to their own brain
1240		To be like "you're this thing" and they might not be

This act is further enhanced through multiplex approaches. It is not simply enough to embrace a trope with agency. One must do so and demonstrate complexity to avoid being considered a walking stereotype. Yes, a Black person can have a boisterous laugh and ratchet behavior and they can also have a Ph.D. These are not mutually exclusive. The complication of identities allows for speakers to be seen as unique and diverse individuals who hold membership in communities but have complex identities. After all, a trope is simply taking one side of a narrative and applying it to a whole person. To introduce complexity would be the antithesis of this, effectively neutralizing it.

"Keeping it real" is critical to Black identity, masculinity, and Gay identity (realness gets real real). Being one's authentic self and "staying in one's truth" is a staple in both the Gay and Black communities [20] and it speaks volumes to how authentically unique identities are weapons against tropes. One cannot truly be a stereotype if one is being oneself. Again, by treating a speaker as a whole being who is complex with various attributes (not unlike a repertoire composed of multiple elements) one is able to see how speakers may be simply drawing on themselves to index themselves, not labels. If a speaker embraces their identities as male, Black, and Gay in a manner which is agentive and customizes it to suit his unique sense of self, rejecting or accepting that which he most closely relates to, he is constructing his own repertoire. In this next Transcript, Dan is clearly an agent who has taken charge of defining himself.

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[20] Perhaps this is a shared feature resulting from proximity between communities or simply the result of being marginalized.

Transcript 6.10 In a box (Mary Jane- BiWF)

Exchange #4	**@8 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
265	Dan	M **Cause see y-** I remember when I first realized that I was like a guy**.**
266		**Cause like** my dad
267		He bought me a fire truck**?**
268	Mary Jane	=mhm
269		And =**like** I also like played with dolls cause my sister had dolls too
270		**Like** we just **like** played together
271		He was like "stop playing with her dolls"
272		**Blah blah blah**
273		And **like**
274		It was **like** some other stuff in there too
275		But then he w- **like**
276		Really wanted me to play with this fire truck
277		And I was jus' **like why**
278		I just didn't understand it
279		**Cause** it wasn't **like** nearly as fun
280	Mary Jane	Mhm
281	Dan	And it's **jus- like**
282		These realizations
283		They're kinda all **like**
284		I dunno they're not **like** very fun experiences
285		I would say

Exchange #4	**@8 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
286	Mary Jane	=Yeah
287	Dan	=But **like**
288		It would just often be
289		At a v- at a time when someone like tells you
290		Or like **they try to put you in this box** of like
291		"you can't do =**something"**
292	Mary Jane	=Mhm
293	Dan	Because you are this
294	Mary Jane	Mhm
295	Dan	So yeah that's just like
296		What I've noticed
297		With those those questions and those answers
298		Like in my own experience too
299	Mary Jane	Did you end up playing with the fire truck at all
300	Dan	Um
301		=((unintelligible))
302	Mary Jane	=or did you tell your dad like 'nah'
303	Dan	I mean I didn't play w-
304		I just didn't play with the toys
305		Cause like oh they-
306		It wasn't fun

Exchange #4	**@8 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
307		**Like h@@**
308		=What was I **s'posed** to do
309	Mary Jane	=That makes me so sad cause like
310		Shut you outta that space
311		And you're like
312		That's fine
313	Dan	Yeah
314	Mary Jane	I guess I'll **jus**- go do my own thing
315	Dan	Mhm
316		**Cause** there was also this **like**
317		Website too
318		That my sister had
319		It was like **doll wars**
320		And you would like dress up dolls
321		Like I used to play with that too
322	Mary Jane	Mhm
323	Dan	And then then my parents were like
324		"You know you can't play that anymore"
325		Like that would just **like**
326		Stop me from being Gay
327		ºLike that was **like**
328		I dunno

Exchange #4	**@8 min**	
Line	**Speaker**	
329		It was just weirdº
330	Mary Jane	Mhm

As he recounts the narratives about his family and society, Dan makes the demand that he not be put in a box, moving the idea from the abstract (Transcript 6.9) to reality. In addition to defying tropes via agency, the performance of identity can be solidified via repetitive behavior. Drawing on Judith Butler's (1990) emphasis on repetition, I argue that it is not sufficient to simply perform an act once to call it an identity, one must deliberately and repetitively do so as a means of constructing the self. Dan has made it a habit of critiquing and challenging societal norms about identity and this Transcript is no exception. He actively voices his disdain towards society's confines in Line 272 and makes this a moment of resistance during which he defies the labels placed upon him (Lines 288-91). This constant defiance is not only a means of performing identity, but as the self is ever-emergent, each time it is done, Dan's sense of self is fortified as uniquely his and as protected against outside influence. It could be argued then that the more he recounts these narratives, the more solidified his identity becomes over the course of this project. At the beginning of this chapter, I mentioned the AAL treatment of identity as done. Interestingly enough, one of the most commonly cited AAL features is the use of Habitual 'be'. The presence of such a feature suggests an understanding of being as root-

ed in repetition and habit vs. a momentary act. Identity is not just something we have, it is something we do (Butler 1990) and with enough practice, who we BE.

Transcript 6.12 "Just livin' my life" (Jabari- GBM)

In this Transcript, Dan is discussing his dating/social life with Jabari and the need to focus on himself in this new environment where he is surrounded by White people. What stood out about this Transcript is Dan's use of AAL and relaxed speech as his constructed self surfaces. He appears to exhibit complete comfort and authenticity during this moment of talk as his speech is much more casual and emotional. As he relates to Jabari, it is clear, both linguistically and identity-wise that Dan perceives himself as a Black man and always has despite the pressure to prove his membership. He just prioritizes his identities depending on the circumstance. Similarly, the content of his commentary about being single makes it clear that he also embraces his Gay identity without a compulsion to prove it.

Exchange #1	**@48 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1580	Dan	I don't know
1581		I'm just **livin'** my life
1582		**tryna** focus on me I guess
1583		that's that's what I think
1584		it's just I don't know
1585		I go to ((local University))
1586		there are a bunch of **Caucasian** people here
1587	Jabari	Yes ((whisper))

Exchange #1	**@48 min.**	
Line	**Speaker**	
1588	Dan	the **Gay people here is** just like
1589		Umm
1590		I don't know that
1591		yeah I'm not like looki**n'** for em
1592		I'm just out here
1593		livi**n'** my life
1594		**you know** it's college I'm a first year
1595		you know I **can't be** out here
1596	Jabari	Oh you're a freshman
1597	Dan	Yeah
1598		I can't just be **out here hoe-ing** or whatever
1599		Okay
1600		I need to study (**(suck teeth))**
1601		gotta do me right =now
1602	Jabari	=so are you equating being Gay to being a hoe
1603	Dan	no I mean like
1604		looking for some**thing** consistently on a constant basis
1605		that's kinda like can't do that right now
1606		don't have time
1607		I'm a busy person
1608	Jabari	so you say
1609	Dan	Mhm
1610		oh you don't believe me?

Despite, his confrontational manner, Jabari does put a significant amount of energy into getting to know Dan personally which points to a more complex picture of his aggressive approach. In trying to get Dan (who is more reserved) to open up, Jabari asks a series of personal questions about Dan's experiences, his academic interests and, in this case, his dating life. This Transcript becomes more personal as the conversation has developed which could be indexical of the tension of the negotiation slowly dissipating. This tension has seemed to take much longer to culminate than it did with Marc, but this may be a result of Jabari's aggressive demeanor as he has yet to yield power mutually as Marc did. Despite this, his relationship with Jabari has shifted as negotiation seems to be less necessary and their self-presentations and corresponding speech are indicators of this.

This Transcript reveals a lot about Dan's sense of self and his experience at college. What is interesting is that he mentions the number of White people at his university (sense of loneliness/isolation) and alludes to Gay people as White by default in (Lines 1586-1588). As he is describing himself and his experiences in a candid manner, his presentation of AAL surfaces and he exhibits a number of AAL features as he discusses with Jabari his life and struggles. While discussing his lack of involvement with Gay men (Lines 1586-88), who Dan marked as White by default, Dan and Jabari begin to create a solidarity based on their shared experience as Gay Black men who exist within a larger Gay culture and the power struggle seems to fade. As this happens, Dan draws on AAL much more, indexing his disalignment with Gay White men, his Black identity, and connection with Jabari. As Dan is acclimating to a new environment and period in his life

where he will no doubt discover and reshape his identity as an adult, there is still a remarkable level of agency and assurance in who he is both racially and sexually. And for him, there is no conflict to manage. He is just livin' his life and doing him.

Transcript 6.13 "I'm doin' me" (Mary Jane- BiWF)

Exchange #4 @20 min.

Line	**Speaker**	
848	Dan	I ju**s-**
849		I just l say I like
850		Got mine from my **friends**
851	Mary Jane	Yeah
852	Dan	Mostly
853		Not really my family
854		Cause **like**
855		I mean **they** did specific things **like**
856		Instill values into me
857	Mary Jane	Mhm
858	Dan	But not **like** how I actually like
859		view other people
860		**Like** as
861	Mary Jane	mhm
862	Dan	Or **like**
863		Being **like** queer
864		Like how I should be other people

Exchange #4 @20 min.

Line	Speaker	
865	Mary Jane	Yeah
866		And there's **jus-**
867		~Whenever I was around my friends I would **jus-** like ~
868		
869		I would just like ask them questions
870		And be like 'hey are **ya'll** okay'
871		And then I became that friend
872		Who was jus- like
873		"J- where's Dan
874		Like he should've checked up on **ya'll**
875		like what's up and stuff like that so"
876	Mary Jane	Mhm
877	Dan	I it **jus-**
878		~**Kinda** like developed over time within my own friend group~
879	Mary Jane	Mhm
880	Dan	And then **jus- kinda** like
881		**Reinforced** it somehow
882		And **((teeth suck))**
883		Now I'm here
884	Mary Jane	And **doin**' you?
885	Dan	Yeah I'm jus- **doin**' me

Exchange #4 @20 min.

Line	Speaker	
886	Mary Jane	M
887		So yeah

In this final Transcript, Dan speaks with Mary Jane about the source of his identity, explaining that he did not receive it from his family or subscribe to notions of identity performance that he was raised with. He opted instead to source his identity from information gathered from friends in conjunction with his natural proclivity to be a caretaker. Combining a number of elements sourced from different community groups, Dan explains how he manufactured his own identity in a manner that is reminiscent of the bricolage construction of the linguistic repertoire (Gumperz 1964; Benor 2008, 2011). He concludes his statement by expressing how this identity was solidified via repetition and evolved over time from a bunch of pieces into a cohesive unit which he refers to simply as "doin me."

With or without language, the indexical nature of identity makes it performative. This performance can be enacted via clothes, speech, or actions. Dan's self-distancing from his family (Line 855) is an act of distinction. He is drawing a clear boundary of who he is and who he is not based on association. Further, he makes clear his identity as he establishes his Queer community membership over essentialized desire. He does not just happen to be Gay this is an identity which he fully embraces and enacts via alignment, speech, and defense. Dan concludes by remarking on the ways in which repetition of ac-

tions which align with his self-defined identity lead to solidification (Line 881), bringing us full circle back to Butler (1990). In conjunction with agency, complexity, and repetition, acts (be they speech, maneuvers, or dress) eventually become our reality, and in this case, the self. Thus, all that he does has led him to who he is and will continue to do so. In short, he's just doin' him.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to examine the role of language in the performance of identity. In order to do that, I explored discourse beyond the confines of linguistic labels and features and looked at it as equally complex as Dan's identity, hence my uptake of repertoire theory (See Chapter 5). By liberating his identity from the confines of labels, I was able to see identity as both multifaceted and always in motion. It is not static, but it is also not chaotic. The repertoires are moving (as is reflected by the act of intraspeaker variation examined in Chapter 5) but with agency, Dan is able to control the movements. In the case of maintaining his repertoire, he is able to decide which variety takes priority in times of necessity. Similarly, as his identity is multifaceted, it could be argued that it is in motion as he highlights whichever he decides during moments of talk (via intraspeaker variation). Because of the porous boundaries of the linguistic repertoire and the use of it by linguistic individuals as complex agents, features can hold multiple indexicalities. Certain features are employed by more than one linguistic variety and thus may index more than one membership. Either way, we cannot ignore the fact that because Dan holds membership in multiple identity groups, he embodies them. Further, the lines can easily become blurred for Dan, particularly with regards to identity because at the end of the

day, he's just "doin him." Dan is Gay Black and Male in whichever order is most appropriate for the moment because it doesn't matter. There is no order. All of these are him and he is, in turn, they. This is reflected in his speech. These boundaries and labels only exist for a limited purpose. By treating language and identity as extending beyond these confines, I was able to map Dan's linguistic repertoire onto that of his identity and observe how he constructs one by way of the other. If speaking is a form of action and identity is enacted (via performance) then it would stand to reason that speakers can do their identities via the act of speech. If this be the case, the construction of the self is a constant process of performing and reconfiguring through agency and speaking as doing the self could very easily be the essence of being. For all intents and purposes, Dan's speech and sense of being are one and the same.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation sought to make several contributions to the fields of Sociolinguistics and Linguistic Anthropology by expanding the methodological discussion and analysis of language beyond a single faceted evaluation of language and identity. The goal of this project was to enhance the burgeoning literature that has begun to deal with complex identity (Kroskrity 1993; Barrett 2017) and intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989). My efforts to add to this discussion embraced the multidimensional nature of identity, observing it in a number of settings that highlighted its multiplex nature so that I could analyze the ways in which separate elements of identity interact with one another. This provided space for a theoretical understanding of repertoire theory, as it relates to both language and identity, which could allow for a more complex and nuanced understanding of both phenomena.

7.2 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The goal of this dissertation was to examine the role of language in the social construction of identity, more specifically, the use of the linguistic repertoire in the construction of a multiplex identity. I wanted to evaluate the ways in which the repertoire was used to construct identity and its importance in said process in hopes of gaining a more thorough understanding of the relationship between the two. My intent was to approach

identity construction as three interdependent processes: power negotiation, group identity maintenance, and performance. When negotiating the power norms associated with his identities, Dan employed language associated with power-based identities such as masculinity and Blackness to both reproduce and challenge said norms. By switching in and out of codes and employing different features in unique combinations as well as using power based features to index power in ways which are not typically expected, he managed to subvert assumed associations of power in many instances. For example, as a Gay man, the heteronormative presumption might be that when dealing with a Straight man, Dan would not display aggression (as it is hegemonically marked as masculine and Straight by proxy). By exerting power over a Straight male speaker (Cody), Dan subverted this association by re-routing it and creating a new link in Chapter 4. He oriented around speakers (spatially via stance and verticality) leading to the creation of six personae with which he negotiated power. Dan enacted said personae by drawing on the power-based features within his repertoire while creating distance or alignment to index his positioning with in-group and out-group community members. From this perspective, language functioned as a mirror of Dan's construction of himself.

In the power-personae framework from Chapter 4, I address the personae as binaries (Interviewer/Interviewee, Challenger/Defender, Authority/Comrade). However, that approach is admittedly limited and it was designed based on the work for the research at hand. The lines are constantly blurred between these elements creating space for complexity along a spectrum could arguably be more useful for further work. Thus, I believe

that instead of looking at poles such as these as dyadic, perhaps they should be considered as two extremes of a continuum.

Further, the three binaries are not necessarily mutually exclusive to one another. Given the power dynamics involved (stance, verticality, etc.) and the potential for an unlimited number of other factors, it is not beyond the realm of reality to consider that they may indeed intersect with one another, particularly since they share common qualities, the distinction being a simple matter of variation. If, for instance, one could map the personae on a graph with stance being represented by the x-axis and verticality represented by the y-axis, a persona would be placed on the chart accordingly. Additions of other pertinent variables may actually lend a spatially based framework that exhibits different types of power beyond my present personae, illuminating on the nuance of power dynamics.

Though I presented four dynamics upon which to base this framework (two power based and two conversational based), it is more than reasonable to assume that there are countless other variables which could alter and likely enhance this frame. For example, different types of power elements and the ways in which they are interpreted in various cultures could grossly affect the personae presented. In addition, the frame that I present has not distinguished power as authoritarianism, oppressive, or completely relational. Furthermore, this framework was based on an interview instead of a conversation. It may look completely different if the conversation were deeply intimate, professionally casual, or completely domineering (in which case, the assignment of orders could become a potential variable as well). These considerations are of course beyond the scope of this

projects, but the incorporation of other potential variables as well as a visual representation of the spatial relationship between these personae may create a more useful framework that could yield situation specific personae. This ability could allow for a uniquely in depth analysis and subsequent understanding of multiple power dynamics and the ways in which they can be negotiated.

I acknowledge that the power/personae framework used in this dissertation was specifically constructed to account for Dan's social maneuvering and may, in fact, not be generalizable for other speakers. There are likely other social factors at play, other roles not taken into consideration, and other personae that have yet to be discovered. As proven during moments of solidarity, power can be set aside in conversational interactions. The power/personae framework only begins to breech the surface of power negotiations via language. Thus, I would be remiss to not acknowledge the thorough exploration of social positioning as hierarchical which proved to be pertinent to my analysis (French and Raven 1959; Goffman 1981; Bourdieu 1986, 1991; Lefebvre 1991; Dubois 2007).

As Dan attempted to maintain his identity group memberships via stance in Chapter 5, he drew on linguistic varieties to index distance or solidarity. Identity based group memberships functioned as the source of linguistic resources (as varieties) which Dan used to index solidarity or animosity with speakers via stance, thus positioning himself and reifying his community memberships. By moving in and out of varieties based on need, Dan was able to form cohesive identity and linguistic repertoires by mitigating constructed conflict between them. This positioning was dependent on a number of factors, notably threats towards particular identities. When tasked with choosing an allegiance

based on potential conflict, he demonstrated this prioritization via the same process of stance-taking, using the varieties as a means of doing so. While I mentioned the possibility of intragroup conflict due to multiple memberships and complexity, a full examination of power dynamics within a speech community was beyond the scope of this project.

In the final analysis chapter, Dan's identity construction was brought to life via linguistic performativity. As Dan behaved as a social actor, he actively drew from his repertoire (a cohesive unit with clear yet flexible boundaries) in order to construct his own unique sense of identity as multiplex. Dan's use of discourse to actively forge his identity as self beyond categories and social limitations highlights the role of agency in the social construction of reality. Though identities are arguably foisted upon individuals via society and group memberships, Dan's behavior supports the social constructionist view that speakers are able to take their identities (and thus social realities) into their own hands, that they are not just the helpless receptacles of labels, and that as social actors, they have power in shaping the realities taken for granted. Using the repertoire and all the resources at his disposal, Dan moved in and out of varieties, drawing from the repertoire at will to enact his uniquely complex identity, demonstrating the power of speech as both reflective and constructive.

I believe that by continuing to look more closely at the nature of the relationship between language and socially constructed identity, we can begin to unpack and pinpoint the ways in which speech gives birth to reality. If, as pointed out in Chapter 6, illocutionary force is a means of acting and enacting identity, is it capable of creating other social

constructs? If speech can be proven as a tool in the construction of social realities, is it possible to also use it to restructure of even deconstruct our social existence?

Dan's use of language evolved from a mirror of his negotiation to a means of maintaining his identity group memberships via stance. Initially, his use of intraspeaker variation to negotiate and maintain his identity appeared to be totally unrelated to me. However, if we take into account Dan's use of language as action and consider the fact that both negotiation and maintenance are actions, in themselves, we can draw on the framework from Chapter 6 to examine his use of language to actively construct his identity throughout the entire project. As Chapter 6 has suggested, if we were to assume that all speech is an act by extending Speech Act theory and that of locutionary force, an interface between language and identity can be developed via the lens of action and agency. Drawing on Speech Act theory (the foundation upon which our understanding of linguistic performativity is based), it could be argued that speech in itself is an act beyond the simple locutionary. The use of speech to purposefully enact then cannot be far behind. Dan performed, maintained, and negotiated his identity through acts of agency, stance taking, and alignment, actions that were facilitated by performative speech acts. In the midst of this, he did so with all three of his identities, thus constructing a multiplex sense of self, effectively negotiating conflicting and complementary power norms and allegiances among them, forming a cohesive, intersectional self.

7.3 INTRASPEAKER VARIATION/REPERTOIRE THEORY

As my linguistic focus was the repertoire, my secondary goal was to explore the repertoire as a mechanism, investigating its composition, mobility, and usage by speak-

ers. When considering the role of audience design in intraspeaker variation, audience has proven to be critical, whether it involves positioning, allegiance, or performance, taking up Bell's (1984) argument. Dan was tasked with navigating around both in-group and out-group speakers. The very audience he addressed bore the capacity to influence his identity maneuvers and the language with which said identities were associated, to the point of presenting situations in which he had to prioritize his identities based on the group memberships of his interlocutors. Interlocutors introduced, represented, and informed the power to be negotiated and allegiances to be demonstrated. Audience proved to be a motive for shifting but, it was not necessarily the sole motivator of intraspeaker variation. Topic shifts, expertise, power, and positioning all played a role in Dan's adaptation.

When considering the linguistic repertoire, based on the presence of power-based features, it initially appeared to be composed of multiple elements from which speakers draw situationally (code-switching). However, these features didn't appear to exist randomly and seemed to be organized within larger categories (linguistic varieties). From this vantage point, linguistic features are given space to coalesce into linguistic varieties while still aligning with linguistic research of them as power based (such as WL), preserving the repertoire approach as a bricolage composed of a myriad of resources needed for communication (Gumperz 1964; Benor 2008, 2010). That said, when examining Dan's intraspeaker variation, his multiple linguistic resources and their overlap, the linguistic varieties proved to be too confining, leaving little room for complexity. I would argue this limitation to be true for many situations. The crossover nature of certain lin-

guistic features as shared or overlapping suggested that these varieties may in fact exist side by side within the linguistic repertoire and, while there are seeming barriers that would distinguish them, making labels useful (e.g. distinguishing MAE from WL), due to the presence of overlapping features (e.g. lack of nasal fronting), I speculate that the barrier between the varieties are in some way porous, accounting for the overlap of features, allowing them to travel and be shared, facilitating cohesion within the repertoire, much like Young's (2011) "code-meshing." Dan's use of multiple varieties almost simultaneously and with full agency pointed to complete access to the repertoire as a singular entity. By observing Dan's use of intraspeaker variation to index prioritization of an endangered identity, I argue that, in addition to being a unit composed of varieties, the repertoire itself can be shifted by the speaker, prioritizing varieties when necessary.

7.4 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

For this study, a set number of identity categories were highlighted, namely gender, sexuality, and race. Though factors such as age, region, and class-based identities were not prioritized, their potential impact should not be ignored. In the future, I would like to expand the pool of interlocutors to account for different variables such as the above-mentioned. It would be interesting to reproduce this study with speakers who move beyond (or between) binary based identity categories in various ways. Examining the construction of the self by a speaker of mixed racial heritage or one who is gender fluid/genderqueer would lend an interesting take on both the academic study of intersectional identity as well as the use of intraspeaker variation and the use of a myriad of linguistic features and varieties attributed to identity groups. Would the dynamics have unfolded

differently for a Straight Black Female speaker? Would the Sexuality of the female speakers have mattered at all?

As much as I attempted to preempt a power-based relationship and encouraged informal and equilateral interactions, the associations that came with being the "facilitator" still bore weight both for Dan and the participants. There seemed to be a lack of complete clarity and comfort, which must be accounted for, especially when considering the power elements being negotiated as I was unable to account for the power dynamics in retrospect and was not present during the interactions.

Finally, while they have proven to be useful, the frameworks developed for my analysis came about based on the data presented. By tracking Dan's discursive maneuvers when constructing his identity in conjunction with the established research on intra-speaker variation, I was able to map his constructions to his speech to make sense of his presentations. These frameworks may not function exactly the same for every (or any) other speaker when placed within a different context and may, in fact, only apply to this specific project. However, some general conclusions can be drawn for all linguistic individuals doing identity. Notably that, power matters and grossly informs identity maneuvers between speakers. While we cannot limit our discussion of identity and the linguistic individual to speech communities, they must be acknowledged as the source from which we draw constructive behaviors and speech until speakers are able to take agency in their self-construction. In the future, I look forward to the opportunity to test and hone these approaches if they hold any promise of expanding the treatment of language and society.

7.5 FURTHER RESEARCH/ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

This work presents a number of questions and revelations which inform our understanding of not only language, but the way in which speech shapes our constructed realities. Despite the work of Kimberle Crenshaw and innumerable Black female scholars, the social treatment of Blackness continues to imply maleness by default, with femininity being a marked deviation from the "norm." While my focus has been on a Black male, it has attempted to complicate the treatment of Black masculinity beyond the hypersexual, heteronormative trope. The Black Queer community has yet to be fully recognized within the larger Black community for its contributions (past and ever present) to the culture as well as to Black liberation. Further, this project has made strides to present Black Gay men as central within the Gay community, challenging the treatment of Gay as White by default. Finally, the incorporation of racialized masculinities as well as the complication of performative gender beyond heteronormativity has breeched the boundaries of Gender studies as well. While Gay masculinity is not a novel concept (Cheseboro 1981a; Barrett 2017), the topic is ever-expanding and this project has made an effort to contribute to its discussion. This type of research could help clarify the boundaries of identity (at what point do the intersections actually cross paths) while ultimately blurring the boundaries between identities (e.g., who is to say where and when notions of "legitimate" Blackness begin and Whiteness ends for a biracial individual?).

Alongside the work of Denise Troutman (2001), Sonja Lanehart (2009), Jacquelyn Rahman (2008), H. Samy Alim and Geneva Smitherman (2012), Tracey Weldon (forthcoming), and countless other scholars, this project has participated in the expansion of the

discussion of AAL beyond young, urban, Straight Black men. Inclusion of AAL in the narrative of GMS will go a long way towards demonstrating the vast complexity within the Gay community as well as the larger LGBTQ+ community and will hopefully contribute a more nuanced treatment of GMS, particularly given the linguistic contributions of both Gay Black men and Black women.

Chapter Four of this project examined the use of language as evidence of the ways in which Power is embedded in our identities. Further research into power-based language may demonstrate the role of language as more than just evidence of societal power structures. It is possible that language is one of the tools through which linguistic individuals create and sustain power systems and inequality. Though limited, the power personae framework could prove useful in the examination of language and power beyond Dan, and perhaps even beyond a single speaker. With further research, it may be possible to hone this framework to apply to a number of power-based interactions for individuals as well as entire communities lending insight to hegemonic forces as they relate to linguistic varieties marked as powerful (i.e. MAE). Section 7.3 gave a brief overview of my theoretical contributions concerning the composition and nature of the linguistic repertoire creating a sense of organization and nuance that reflects intraspeaker variation as a process. While my current presentation is purely theoretical, it may serve as a launchpad for an in-depth study of how the repertoire actually works in speakers' minds which could mirror how the repertoire of the self and language are conceptualized. Additionally, based on my view of identity construction via the lens of J.L. Austin's (1972) Speech Act Theory, I now have a skeletal interface that could potentially map language onto socially con-

structed identity which could prove extremely useful when examining the study of language and society.

Given the above proposed interface linking speech and the enacted identity, further exploration of the connection between language and the self would be a fascinating starting point. How deep does this interface run? If language is proven to serve as a critical way of doing the self, what happens if an identity associated language is threatened or removed from a speaker's repertoire (e.g. language death or language sanctioning)? Would the associated identity membership be compromised as well? How would the repertoire of the self adapt to such a drastic change? Is the relationship between language and identity equal and reciprocal? Would the removal of identity (e.g. forced assimilation) be just as impactful to one's linguistic performance? What are the implications for research concerning speech pathology, language acquisition, and linguistic preservation?

The questions (and their research possibilities) are endless and could be expanded into any number of academic arenas to include: Semantics, Pragmatics, Language preservation, Linguistic Anthropology, Language Acquisition, Philosophy, Sociology, and Education. I would like to pursue as many of these queries as possible and, once established, expand my theoretical understanding of language and identity to language and reality to develop a deeper understanding of social constructs, their origins, the power relations with which they are associated and their societal impact. The ultimate goal of this work would be to investigate who creates them, how, and for what purposes in hopes of addressing the sociopolitical issue of undervalued linguistic varieties and the silencing of disenfranchised populations and the social actors with which they are associated.

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APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

LINGUISTICS PROGRAM

Study Title: The Negotiation of Multiplex Identities through Language

Demographic information:

1. Pseudonym:
2. Age:
3. Gender*
    a. FeMale b. Male c. Other: _____
4. Race/Ethnicity
    a. African-American b. White c. Asian d. Hispanic e. Other:_____
5. Sexual Orientation

a. Gay b. Straight c. Bisexual d. Other:_____

6. Occupation:

7. Highest level of education

a. High School b. Bachelor's Degree c. Master's Degree d. Doctorate

8. Do you consider yourself a speaker of:

a. African-American English

b. Standard American English

c. Proper English

d. Gay Male/FeMale English

e. All of the above

f. Other: _____

9. Which do you use more? (How often? Contexts/Environments? With what types of people?)

Interview Questions:

1. Where are you from/where did you grow up?
2. If not from Atlanta, how did you come to live here?
3. In which neighborhood do you reside?
4. Do you perceive a difference between how African-Americans and Whites (in Atlanta?) speak? Please describe.
    a. Does gender affect these differences?
    b. Does sexual identity affect these differences?
5. Are there other observations about language and identity that you would like to share with me?

*For multiple choice questions, please circle ALL that apply.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

LINGUISTICS PROGRAM

Study Title: The Negotiation of Multiplex Identities through Language

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The study: The purpose of this research project is to observe the connection between language and various facets of identity, notably: ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. You are being asked to participate in this study because as you meet the requirements of being a native speaker of American English and possess one or more of several identity elements that to relate to this study. The interactions consist of one-on-one open-ended conversations guided by predetermined questions concerning gender, ethnicity and sexuality followed by a brief (20-30 min.) demographic interview/debriefing with me. The conversations will last approximately one hour and the session will be audio taped so that I can accurately reflect on what is discussed, though I will not be in the room at the time. This survey is both voluntary and anonymous. You are not required to answer any question that you do not wish to. If you decide at any time during the data collection process that you would rather not participate, you are free to withdraw and have the recordings and collected information deleted. If you complete the data collection process, you will receive compensation in the form of a $50 gift card offered in exchange for your participa-

tion. If you have any questions about the study itself, please contact: Brianna Cornelius (brc@email.sc.edu) or Dr. Tracey Weldon (weldont@mailbox.sc.edu) at the University of South Carolina.

Task Description: This is intended to be an open-ended discussion, that is topic-driven but not confined to specific questions. It is designed to elicit candid conversation between the two participants with regard to issues of language and identity. The goal of this activity is to collect personal stories and narratives about everyday experiences concerning language, race, gender, and sexuality from childhood into adulthood.

Date _____

Time _____

Location _____

Participant 1 _____

(pseudonym for entire study only)

Participant 2 _____

(pseudonym only)

Race/Ethnicity

- Is race real?
- Please spend some time discussing your experiences concerning your race, particularly in this time in our nation's history? In conjunction/juxtaposition with other races?
- What do you perceive to be the benefits/drawbacks of your particular racial membership?
- Have you ever wanted to change your race? If so, why? What do you imagine that would be like?
- Why do you think people find race to be such a big deal?
- Have you ever been told that you "act your race"? What do you think this means?
- In your opinion, what does it mean to "act White"?
- In your opinion, what does it mean to "act Black"?
- Have you ever been accused of not "acting your race"? What did this refer to at the time?
- What role does language play in "acting one's race"?

Gender

- Is gender real?
- Can you define it?
- Is gender the same as sex?
- If not, what's the difference?
- Do you remember when you first realized your gender?
- Did you ever ask questions about gender as a child?
- Do you like your gender?
- Have you ever wanted to change your gender?
- How do you perform your gender?
- Where did you learn that/those behaviors from?
- Do you think gendered behavior and expectations differ in Black communities vs. White communities?

- If so, do you believe that your gendered behavior matches the expectations of your community?
- What role does language play in these expectations?

Sexuality

- How do you define sexuality?
- How is your gender affected by sexuality?
- What would you define as “acting Gay”?
- What would you define as “acting Straight”?
- Are “acting like a man/woman” influenced by “acting Gay/Straight”?
- Do you think that you “act Gay/Straight”? Explain?
- What role does language play in this regard?
- Have you ever felt that your sexual identity conflicted with your racial identity? If so, please explain? Did language play a role in this conflict?

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

LINGUISTICS PROGRAM

Study Title: The Negotiation of Multiplex Identities through Language

SUBJECT INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT

Investigator(s):
Brianna Cornelius, English Department/Linguistics Program, The University of South Carolina, brc@email.sc.edu.

Faculty supervisor: Tracey L. Weldon, English Department/Linguistics Program, The University of South Carolina, weldont@mailbox.sc.edu.

Purpose:
As part of the requirements for my degree in Linguistics, I am studying the use of language by speakers when expressing various facets of their identities. The purpose of this study is to investigate the function of language as part of a speaker's identity. If you fit the below criteria, or if you know of other eligible participants, I would sincerely appreciate your time and consideration.

Participation Requirements:
In order to participate in this study, you must fit the following criteria:

- a native speaker of American English
- aged 18 or older

Procedures:
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to contribute to a one-on-one discussion with another participant concerning your personal experiences of language, race, gender, sexuality, and identity. The conversations will last approximately one hour and the session will be audio taped so that I can accurately reflect on what is discussed. The interviews will take place in a private meeting room on a local college campus. The interactions will consist of one-on-one open-ended conversations guided by predetermined questions concerning gender, ethnicity and sexuality followed by a brief (20-30 min.) demographic interview/debriefing with me. The recordings and other data collected will be stripped of any information by which you may be identified and used only for academic purposes. The recordings will only be reviewed in their entirety by me and my dissertation advisor, though selected Transcripts may be shared with the public through scholarly presentations and/or publications.

Risks/Discomforts:
There is a minimal anticipated risk associated with the guided discussion- notably that of one's sexual orientation being exposed via conversation. Every effort will be made to protect your identity, as outlined in the "Confidentiality" section below. In addition, you and the other participants will be asked to protect the privacy of the other study participants, though there is no way to guarantee that your privacy will be protected by these participants. Your consent to participating in this study means that you are aware of this risk and willing to accept the possibility of being "outed" as a result of your participation.

Confidentiality:
The information in the study will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. I will do my best to protect your identity by stripping your name and other identifying information from the transcripts and recordings and assigning you a pseudonym (i.e., fake name). You and others in the group are asked to keep the identity of participants and the information that they share private. Data will be stored in a secure, password-protected, and limited access location. All data management will be conducted with standard practices sanctioned by the university.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal:
Your decision to take part in this research study is entirely voluntary. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. If you decide at any time during the data collection process that you would rather not participate, you are free to withdraw and have the recordings and collected information deleted.

Compensation/Reward
If you complete the data collection process, you will receive compensation in the form of a $50 gift card offered in exchange for your participation. It is likely that others in the community/society will also benefit from a clearer understanding of the role of language in the construction of identity.

Questions:
If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance at the University of South Carolina at 901 Sumter Street, Byrnes Building Suite 515, Columbia, SC, 29208; office phone 803-777-7095. If you have any questions about the study itself, please contact: Brianna Cornelius (brc@email.sc.edu) or Dr. Tracey Weldon (weldont@mailbox.sc.edu) at the University of South Carolina.

Statement of Your Consent:
"I have read and understand the above description of this research study. I have been informed of the risks and benefits involved, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. Furthermore, I have been assured that any future questions I may have will also be answered by a member of the research team. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time during the data collection process. I understand that I will receive a copy of this consent form."

Participant's Printed Name _____

Participant's Signature _____
Date _____